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the free press

Volume 39, Issue 22 April 28, 2008
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE



LAST EASTER
REVIEW

PAGE 13

Former students convicted of terrorizing

Grade and Benner change pleas,
face 30 days for 2006 bomb threat

Joel C. Theriault

Staff Writer

Two former students were convicted last month for their involvement in one of the '06 bomb threats. While they serve 30-day sentences, police are closing in on a male suspect who allegedly phoned in the threat.

Erin Grade, 20, of Rockland, and Geneva Benner, 20, of Thomaston, were sentenced at separate hearings in March. In addition to jail time, each woman was ordered to share \$1354.95 in restitution to various departments at USM.

Between April 23, 2006 and October 19, 2007, the university was targeted by 14 separate bomb threats. These threats took many forms, including some via telephone, e-mail and one written in a bathroom stall.

On the afternoon of Dec. 4, 2006, court documents indicate that Benner and Grade were two of five people in a car headed to the Portland campus. A third, male passenger allegedly made the threat via telephone, which led to the evacuations of the Portland and Gorham campuses. USM Police Chief Lisa Beecher said that her department hopes their continued investigation will lead to his arrest in the next few

See **THREAT** page 4

From Brandeis to Egypt to Maine Introducing President Selma Botman



Sarah Trent

Executive Editor

When you talk to Selma Botman about budgets and 26 programs and community and university morale, her eyes glaze over. It's not that she isn't interested, and she's certainly articulate – it's just that autopilot has kicked in.

See **BOTMAN** page 5

Pulling together the budget

Jared Thurber

Contributing Writer

The president's office has overspent its budget by an average of \$388,000 every year for the last four years, according to financial reports. Office supplies, paper – all those line items added up.

But the way the system worked, it never really mattered. Realistically, prior to 2007, there was no "real" budget in place to be overspent.

When a department at an institution like USM doesn't have practical, transparent accounting practices, it's prone to develop a "structural deficit," said James O'Brien, the administrative assistant for the president's office.

A structural deficit, he says, occurs when financial responsibilities of the department grow, but its budget stays the same. He gives the example of increasing pay-rates based on a 3 percent inflation rate.

"You'd assume that the account that you use to pay that person would be increased to accommodate the change. That wasn't the case here."

According to O'Brien, the amount of money budgeted for the president's office remained the same from 1991 until last year. Although the president's office is but a grain of sand on the USM beach, the lack of accounting, which allowed for overspending, was symptomatic of the university as a whole.

"Under the [former] Chief Financial Officer, Sam Andrews, the strategy was spend first, we will find money later," O'Brien said. "Some departments consistently have an excess of funds at the end of the year, while others consistently overspend their budget."

Andrews was the CFO for more than 30 years, and, according to O'Brien, "he knew where pools of money were." Money sloshed back and forth between pools to cover de-

partments who overspent. His office, the president's office, was one of the over-spenders.

To get some perspective on this method of budgeting – which to some extent might seem reasonable to those of us who slosh money back and forth between a checking and savings account to make sure nothing bounces – we called up a few people in the financial advising business.

In regards to the old "spend first, find later" strategy, Mark Dorsett of Northeast Financial said that, "by definition, that is not a budget."

"It sounds to me like a case of poor planning, nobody seemed to be doing any accounting," said Larry Dwight, a financial advisor at Morgan Stanley & Co.

"It is best to pay as you go, put some money aside in a rainy day fund, create a budget and stick with it," he said.

The \$8.2 million question lately, especially given the

See **BUDGET** page 18

SEE PAGES 18
AND 19 FOR
MORE ON ...

The hiring freeze
and what it has
saved (and lost)

Faculty and their
job security

Professional staff
scared to breathe

Finding new
ways to pay for
classified staff



Seder Dinner

As Americans, we often take our freedom to question for granted. The Jewish Seder Passover dinner is a place for all to question their freedom and discuss ideas. The event asks people to question, how is this night different from all other nights? How am I different tonight?

Those questions, along with many others, were raised this past last week at the USM

See **DINNER** page 5

Bringing faith to campus Interfaith chaplaincy gives space, resources to all students

Abigail Cuffey

Staff Writer

Whether religious or not, many students have walked by the interfaith chaplaincy office on the Portland campus. In case any were wondering what goes on inside the little white building, it's more than just a campus church.

The chaplaincy aims at "supporting religious and spiritual life in all of its expressions" and continues to do so through the education of beliefs, values and ethics.

The office supports a variety of religions and faiths and student, including the Baha'i, Christian, Jewish, Intervarsity (evangelical Christian), Muslim and Pagan associations, clubs and fellowships.

For those looking for a place to reflect, students and faculty members can visit "A Space Apart," a room located in the interfaith office on the Portland campus, next to Payson-Smith. The chaplains encourage anyone to visit, meditate or pray there.

The chaplains – recognized leaders for each represented group or faith -- meet monthly to plan events, which include "fish bowl" topics

that model how to engage in dialogue with others who may not share your beliefs.

This semester, the team of associate chaplains has created a series of programs designed to discuss topics such as sex and sexuality, money and the environment.

Reverend Andrea Thompson-McCall is the USM interfaith chaplain, also serving as director of the office of community service and civic engagement. Shirley Bowen, an ordained priest in the Episcopal Church who serves as the missionary/Episcopal chaplain appointed by the Diocese of Maine, describes Thompson-McCall and her job as "helping to support students in their spiritual lives on campus."

Bowen says that there are three duties of chaplains at USM: "serving our own faith and students, collaborating as an interfaith team in a larger context and producing educational programming to engage people."

On the number of students involved, Bowen says there are "easily hundreds of students who are exposed to the work at the inter-faith office." There has been a recent increase in student involvement over the past few years, to which

See **FAITH** page 5



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The economy \$ucks

The state of the university within the state of Maine



Part 3 of 3

Matt Dodge

News Editor

Everyday on cable news networks across the globe stock tickers are showing more red. The “almighty dollar” is doing little to earn its title as it drops in value, and the already cash-strapped state of Maine is sharpening the budgetary machete for a new round of cuts.

“Recession” can be a scary and alarming word, and even more alarming to a university that is slowly discovering its own financial woes.

How might a national recession affect USM?

UMaine system administrators promise that academic quality is the first priority, but can a school

like USM – in the face of multi-million dollar deficits – weather the tough economic times ahead?

Timing is everything

“This came at a really bad time,” says Charles Colgan of the recession. Colgan is a professor in USM’s Muskie School of Public Service, and chair of the State of Maine Consensus Economic Forecasting Commission.

“USM built up budget problems when things were going well – then things crashed along with the nation and state as they weakened.”

USM is not the type of school that can easily deal with sudden economic downturns, he says, “this university is under-funded in good times.”

Add to the list of problems a looming budget deficit of \$8.2 million, which USM has addressed by taking out an internal UMaine System loan, set to be paid back by 2014.

The community has been left asking what led to such a deficit.

Murky budgetary and reporting practices have been blamed. However, UMaine System Chancellor and former USM President Richard Pattenaude has a different view.

“The budget system made it harder to understand where we were,” he says, “but it didn’t not cause the budgetary problems.” Instead, Pattenaude sees declining enrollment as a more viable answer.

Finance professor Joel Gold points to what he calls “an unfair share” of the UMaine System allocation to USM as a likely culprit – USM has gotten about 30 percent of the allocation for the last 30 years, despite doubling in size.

Gold sees growth as a worthwhile goal for USM, and one that is already showing some positive return.

“We spent a lot of money, (under former president Pattenaude) but you need to do that sometimes,” says Gold. “Pattenaude grew the university despite low budget money, but I think if you look at the campuses and the faculty, you’ll see that (USM is) a lot better than it has been.”

Flat-funding & tuition increase

A troubled Maine means a troubled USM, according to Colgan, and the latest round of budgetary cuts by the state legislature reflects this. The UMaine System has been “flat funded” for the upcoming fiscal year, which means that it will receive the same \$187 million from the state that it received last year.

“This is basically a cut” says Colgan, noting that the practice of “flat funding” doesn’t take into consideration issues of inflation, the slumping economy, or massive energy cost increases.

USM has very few low-impact strategies available to deal with economic problems.

Termination of positions and tuition increase are some of the only means through which the school can control its finances, and both are met with fierce opposition by faculty, staff and students.

A tuition increase is currently in the works, to be decided upon at a May 8 meeting of the Board of Trustees. Pattenaude hopes that the increase can be kept under ten percent, though others think this is a low estimate.

“Tuition increase is the resource of last resort,” Pattenaude says, but he recognizes that pre-existing budgetary problems like those at USM are made even more dramatic when the state budget doesn’t increase.

Pattenaude does note that the system will increase financial aid at the same rate as tuition in an effort to ease the burden on students.

Looking forward

Colgan helps the state of Maine to prepare its annual economic forecast, given this year at a breakfast in January, but even he admits that it’s hard to see what’s coming.

“This recession has had a lot of surprises in it,” Colgan says. He mentions the collapse of the fifth largest investment firm, Bear Stearns, earlier this year, as one major surprise. A rapidly falling dollar and skyrocketing gas prices are some of the other unforeseen events in this current slump.

Colgan foresees Maine as only experiencing a mild recession with some job loss followed by quick job recovery. He expects

this mild recession to last until 2011, but notes that in that same year, Maine’s Brunswick Naval Air Station will close for good, meaning a huge loss of jobs and state revenue.

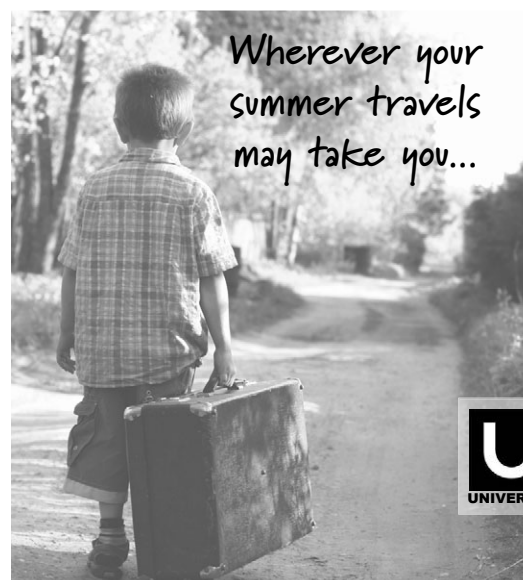
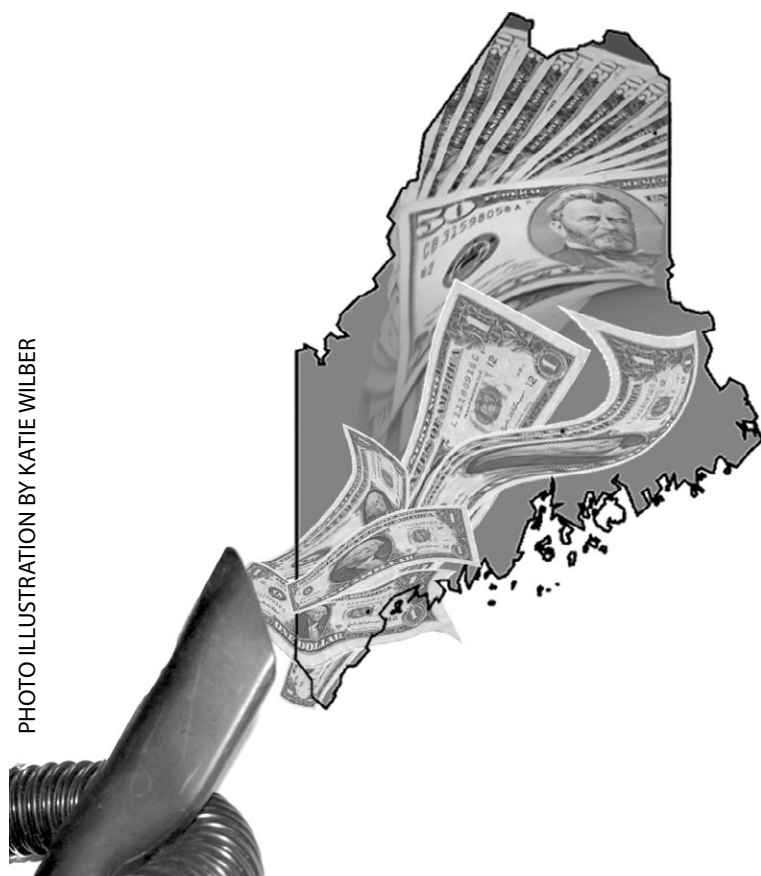
One unintended benefit of the weak American dollar might be rising international enrollment at U.S. schools. With the euro currently worth \$1.60, foreign students might flock to the U.S. for a cheaper education, infusing the nations economy with foreign currency.

Pattenaude mentions that USM’s application numbers (of all students) are up for next fall, a good sign for the university’s financial well-being, although it has been noted by other administrators that the admissions system has changed such that comparing numbers right now might not mean much.

Colgan wants to wait until all the numbers are in to make his final predictions on Maine and USM. “It really depends on there not being a lot more surprises.”

This concludes our three-part series covering the economic recession and its affects on USM, its students and the community. Part one, by Abigail Cuffey, looked at the job market and prospects for USM graduates. Part two, by David O'Donnell, examined the historical effects of national recessions on USM enrollment. Part three, by Matt Dodge, put USM within the context of the state, looking at how the national and state-wide struggles will fit alongside the university's own financial hard times.

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Goodbye, Keith Witherell



USM lost an important member of its staff when IT director Keith Witherell passed away unexpectedly last Tuesday.

Witherell, who was 49, had been with USM since the mid '90s, when he was hired to teach computer courses in the School of Business. Witherell eventually left the classroom for the IT help desk, and was promoted to the position of IT director in 2006.

Witherell is also remembered as a passionate musician, taking piano lessons during his childhood in Cape Cod and performing throughout his life.

He was also an active member of the local theatrical scene, serving as director for the Lyrics Music Theater of South Portland; most recently, he directed the music for the theater’s production of “Man of La Mancha”.

An active member of his community, Witherell also served on the Cape Elizabeth School Board.

His funeral service was held on Sunday April 27 at Hobbs Funeral Home in South Portland.

Alum aims for U.S. Senate

David O’Donnell

Sports Editor

This summer, one USM alum is taking a gamble that he hopes will land him in Washington, D.C. But the trip is more than just a few states away. Political science graduate and Springvale resident Tom Ledue is taking on Maine congressman Tom Allen in the Democratic Party primary this July. That contest will decide who begins the uphill climb against incumbent Republican Senator Susan Collins in November. Even Allen’s entry into the race was seen as something of a long-shot, and he is a reasonably popular elected official. That’s because Senator Collins, despite being a Republican in a blue state, is the kind of Republican blue states love: one widely viewed as a political moderate. This is a characterization that Maine Democrats are getting increasingly more aggressive in challenging. A major rallying point is Collins’ support for the war in Iraq – she voted for the initial resolution, and has generally supported President Bush (while

occasionally criticizing his execution, of late). That, along with her support of Bush’s tax cuts and energy policy, are points that Allen, Ledue and others are trying to drive home. What remains to be decided is which of them is best equipped to deliver the message. Ledue understands that Allen – who has been involved in Maine politics since the early 1990s, when he served as mayor of Portland – could very well coast to the primary on name recognition alone. Indeed, Allen’s campaign is already that of a nominee, his website and mailings squarely aimed at Collins. Ledue has yet to pay for any polling of his own to track how he’s doing. So far, the campaign has been eagerly crisscrossing the state, focused on simply building any recognition – which won’t be easy. This is the first political campaign Ledue has even worked on, never mind been the center of. For the past 25 years, he has been a teacher, administrator and coach at Noble High School in North Berwick. That is not to say that the idea just materialized out of nowhere.

Back in the mid-1980s, when Ledue was taking a human growth and development course at USM, he recalls one assignment: to write his own obituary. He remembers that it included “20 years working in education reform, and then going on to three terms in the United States Senate.” So far, so good. As to why he is taking on Tom Allen, it isn’t a matter of electability – though Allen currently trails Collins by 16 points, according to the latest Rasmussen poll. The problem, as he sees it, is Allen’s lack of specificity when it comes to how he would help push a progressive agenda in the Senate. He cites Allen’s failure to get behind hearings and investigations into the offices of Vice President Dick Cheney. While Ledue says he is mostly proud of the values and history of the Democratic Party, he also feels it has become “complicit, leaning towards middle, and not forward-looking enough.” It is his hope that people are not only looking for something different, but willing to look for it in unlikely places.

Two students convicted in 2006 bomb threat

From THREAT page 1

months. Beecher and detective Penny Belanger have spearheaded the bomb threat investigations since April 2006. Charged with terrorizing, a class-C felony, both women originally pleaded not-guilty. At their March hearings, each changed their pleas, Benner pleading guilty while Grade pled no contest. Asked about the plea change, Grade’s attorney, Henry Shanoski, said that it came because of a collection of factors. While he says that it was not Grade who made the call, “just her being in the car, the fact that it was also her class that was being cancelled – a factor like that might have led the jury to believe that she had an interest in the outcome and was an accomplice to the crime.” In cases like this, he said, “if you’re between a rock and a hard place, you have to make that kind of decision.” While he said that they’re disappointed with the outcome, “we’re happy she can get on with her life after her 30 days.” He says that Grade plans to pursue film studies at Southern Maine Community College. “She’s a very nice girl,” he said, “very thoughtful, good person, and she was in an unfortunate situation and she ended up paying a pretty heavy price.” Benner, tried shortly after Grade, pled guilty to the charge. Her attorney, Stephen J. Schwartz, said that after weighing the risks involved in her plea, “my client took full responsibility for her actions in light of the evidence and the risks.” When she’s released in May, Schwartz expects that Benner “will move on with her life and be a productive member of society.” Both attorneys agree that, in a post-Sept. 11 era, this kind of case is difficult to face. “Terrorism and bomb threats are taken pretty seriously, and rightfully so,” said Shanoski, who said it was in Grade’s best interest to take the deal she got, “even though I was disappointed she had to take it.” Facing a maximum five-year prison term, each was sentenced to 30 days in a county jail. A federal bomb threat charge may apply as well, though neither woman has been charged at this time. The federal statute says that the crime is punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. The Dec. 4 bomb threat for which these women were convicted was one in a series of 14 separate threats for which police are still looking for suspects. A \$20,000 reward is still in effect for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those involved in any of the threats. Smaller rewards will be given for individual tips. According to Craig Hutchinson, the vice president of student and university life, the reward money would come from the university’s gifts fund rather than the operating budget. “I think it was important, given the gravity of the situation, that those determined responsible were held accountable for their

actions,” said Hutchinson. On the convictions of Grade and Benner, he does believe that happened. Benner will be released from Cumberland County Jail on May 19. Grade’s release is scheduled for May 12.

Bomb Threat Timeline
2006
April 23 - Three separate phone calls caused the evacuation of all three USM campuses.
Oct. 2, 3 - A telephoned bomb threat cleared the Portland and Gorham campuses and classes and activities were cancelled for the day. Two threats called in the next day caused a similar evacuation.
Nov. 8 - A phone call threatening a planted bomb was made to the Women’s Resource Center caused an evacuation of the Portland campus.
Nov. 14 - USM’s main switchboard received a bomb threat, resulting in the evacuation of all three campuses.
Nov. 15 - Independent bomb consultant Tim Culbert was hired by USM to train staff volunteers in identifying explosives and search methods. Culbert held three training classes at USM in late November and early December.
Nov. 28 - The first of several e-mail threats was received. After determining the threat level of this e-mail, no evacuation was ordered.
Dec. 4 - A telephone call from an unidentified male caused another evacuation of Portland and Gorham campuses. Bob Caswell, executive director of public affairs, and Craig Hutchinson, vice president of student and university life, revealed the creation of an ad hoc committee called Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT). The team is made up of staff and faculty, including Police Chief Lisa Beecher, to determine the nature of the threats and how to respond to them, such as with evacuation.
Dec. 13 - A threat was received at an undisclosed location. No evacuation was ordered.
2007
Feb. 19 - An e-mail sent on this date was received the following day by the School of Law in Portland.
Mar. 3 - An e-mailed threat discovered two days later at the Undergraduate Admissions Office resulted in an evacuation of the nearby childcare center in Gorham.
July 6 - Two former USM students, Erin Grade and Geneva Benner, were indicted by Cumberland County in connection with the Dec. 4, 2006, threat. Both pled not guilty.
Aug. 11 - An e-mailed bomb threat was received by an undisclosed USM employee.
Sept. 10 - A “spam-type” e-mail was received by several USM personnel. This e-mail was similar to types sent to other universities at around the same time and not considered one of the many USM bomb threats.
Sept. 14 - An e-mailed threat was received by the Lewiston-Auburn campus. No evacuation was ordered.
Oct. 19 - Staff in the Upton Hall administrative wing in Gorham found a piece of graffiti on a women’s bathroom stall vaguely indicating a bomb.
Nov. 5 - Grade and Benner’s court proceedings are delayed until March 2008 due to the medical leave absence of key witness Lisa Beecher, USM’s chief of police.

March 11, 14—Benner and Grade changed their pleas to guilty and no contest, respectively, and were each sentenced to 30 days in Cumberland County Jail and ordered to jointly pay a \$1354.95 restitution to USM.

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Campus interfaith chaplaincy

From FAITH page 1

Bowen credits McCall in “creating a balance of chaplains.”

The interfaith chaplains work outside of the office as well, and help out in other aspects of USM. They are often invited by departments to collaborate on projects, as with RA training and the One Campaign, which helps to end global poverty. They are a belief-in-action community.

Bowen summarizes the goals of the office as “rediscovering and exploring what it is you believe in, integrating beliefs and how students live their lives, as well as helping students be able to be in a respectable relationship in faiths that are not your own.”

Sayings such as “love thy neighbor” have to be consistent with how you live your life, according to Bowen.

A poster in the office says “and who does not want to be treated with love?” It’s a question that’s easier to answer than most would think.

The chaplaincy is a place for students who are trying to find meaning in their lives and “just need help with the journey.” From the open space in the office to the calm aura the office provides, everyone who enters is welcome and treated with respect.

The services offered there are more than just traditional ones, such as noon-day prayer service, meditation, chanting, as well as incorporating music.

Bowen understands that not all people are religious, but realizes “even if you don’t believe in it, it’s nice to have biblical references.”

For more information on how to get involved, e-mail interfaith@usm.maine.edu or visit www.usm.maine.edu/studentlife/interfaith.



COURTESY PHOTO

Students and community members gathered last week for a traditional Passover Seder in Gorham. The event was run by Southern Maine Hillel, a Jewish student group operating under the interfaith chaplain’s office.

From DINNER page 1

Gorham Faculty Dining Room, when Southern Maine Hillel – the Jewish division of USM’s interfaith chaplaincy – hosted a Seder for all interested students and community members.

I was able to attend the traditional Jewish dinner. Once there I immediately greeted and felt welcomed by all.

Once everyone got settled at their tables (which were quite impressively adorned), the “leader” began the interactive recounting of the Exodus from Egypt. The readings included phrases in Hebrew and an explanation of the Passover, as well as punctuated symbolic foods such as “wine” (white grape juice), dipping a green vegetable in salt water and eating matzah.

While unfamiliar with the customs, I tried my best to

gain a better understanding of Jewish history. After re-telling the journey Moses and the Israelites took out of Egypt, one member sitting next to me jokingly asked me if I knew what happened at the end. When I said no, he replied, “they escaped.”

All joking aside, attendees were asked what they were thankful for, and even helped out with the readings.

The last part of the ceremony was the meal, which included hard boiled eggs & parsley, charoset, matzah ball soup, gefilte fish, matzah lasagna, potato kugel, carrot tzimmes and macaroons.

Even the children got involved with the “hiding of the matzah,” winning candy prizes at the end.

I was especially surprised to hear two little girls sitting at my table reciting some of the lyrics in Hebrew. I admired

their knowledge of the religion at such a young age.

In the final remarks, a gentleman from Gorham House elderly home spoke up to thank everyone for a wonderful time. He wanted everyone to know how grateful he was to be invited and accommodated within the group.

I felt his happiness, and was glad I was there to experience such a community event.

At the dinner were more than just members of the Jewish community, but also Muslims and Christians alike. It was refreshing to see everyone together thoroughly enjoying each other’s company.

Southern Maine Hillel is directed by Fae Silverman, who also serves as the Jewish chaplain at USM. Fae is credited by other chaplains as “doing a fabulous job in her first year here.”

Selma Botman’s Middle Eastern studies might benefit USM

From BOTMAN page 1

Botman is moving into the USM president’s house in Gorham on July 1 to begin her new role as USM’s queen bee – but in the meantime, she’s still working out of the City University of New York’s chancellor’s office, which means that she isn’t yet immersed in the daily goings-on of USM.

When she came to Maine a few weeks ago to talk at a local USM-related meeting, I snagged the chance to sit down with her, hoping to introduce her to Free Press readers in a way that other publications had not yet attempted.

Realizing that at this point her policy ideas can only be that – ideas – we wanted to know more about who she is, and how that in itself will shape those ideas, and therefore the university.

I met her in the president’s house – her new house – which is tucked away next to the art gallery on the Gorham campus. The place hasn’t been lived in since Richard Pattenau left his post last year.

I made the mistake of opening our interview with questions everyone has asked before, the same ones I was hoping to avoid – on budgets, 26 programs, community and university morale.

She was quick to apologize that she doesn’t have all the answers yet – but didn’t seem annoyed at my asking how she might deal with retention or what her thoughts are on interim President Joe Wood’s attempt to leave her with a fiscally ‘clean slate.’

In fact, she said she’s grateful for Wood’s “very serious cost containment process,” and said that focusing on graduation, rather than retention, is what best serves the goals of students.

But, like I said, at these kinds of questions, she seemed a little bit glazed.

So in what did she seem interested?

Well, true to her word (which says she’s very much interested in students), it did seem that she was primarily interested in me.

As she walked down the white-carpeted stairs and stepped onto the white-carpeted floor, her heels sank in. In a simple skirted suit, her face lit up when she saw me waiting for her in the barely furnished living room.

I got a handshake and a warm, welcoming smile, as she very neatly took her place on the couch next to me.

Until I looked down at my notebook, I had almost forgotten that I

was a reporter. She seemed more like a long-lost aunt, someone I’d be expecting a hug from, rather than that handshake.

And so we proceeded as quickly as possible through the “business” portion of the interview – budgets, 26 programs, etc. (because it looks bad when we borrow quotes from the Press Herald), but I was glad to sit back and ask her the question that was really on my mind.

How, of all possible paths in life, did she end up becoming a university president?

The glazed look went away.

As an undergrad, Botman went to Brandeis. She majored in psychology, but found that “once I’d completed the requirements, I didn’t want to be in psychology.”

She cites the ‘70s and their upheaval as giving her a sort of chance to find out who she was.

At Brandeis was a professor whom Botman came to admire. Deeply passionate for academic scholarship but also a mother and someone who cared for her students, this professor struck a chord.

“I wanted to be her,” said Botman, “that’s what I want to do.”

By that point she had also developed an interest in the Middle

East, so she dug her feet into the sand and rooted herself in academia, went to Oxford to study the Middle East and on to Harvard following the same path.

The road took her several times into Egypt on an American Research Center Fellowship, and eventually she became a professor of Middle Eastern studies and history.

She said that her study and travels were one of the most fulfilling parts of her life.

While teaching at Holy Cross University, Botman moved quickly from the ranks of a tenured professor into more administrative roles, becoming the chair-elect of the political science department and the director of the international studies program.

Just a few years later, she found herself on the administration of the UMass System, involved in academic affairs while maintaining full professorship.

She moved up in the UMass System and moved to the CUNY system, where she currently serves as the executive vice chancellor and university provost.

She continued to teach as she could, because one, she really likes the students and teaching the Middle East, and two, “it kept my

feet on the ground. It brought me closer to the faculty.”

After a few years at CUNY, she decided in 2007, on something of a whim to apply for one job – and she got it. Her daughter, who recently graduated from Bates, had introduced her to Maine, and Botman fell in love with the place and its people, whom she praises as having a “high level of civility.”

When she found out that USM was searching for a president, she applied.

“The serendipity of life,” she calls it – and now she’s here, starting in July amidst what administrators have been calling “a mess.”

So how might her knowledge of the Middle East help her in sorting through USM? And with training in history, how will Botman help USM look toward its future?

“The Middle East is a region of some turmoil,” she said. “Being able to understand that there’s justice in a lot of areas of the Middle East lets me operate in a collaborative way, looking for commonalities, not differences.”

And, she adds, “if you can navigate the Middle East, surely you can navigate a university.”

Interfaith student groups

Student-initiated and student-run organizations offering opportunities to gather around common religious or spiritual interests for support, personal growth, celebration, and belonging, these groups make important contributions to the quality of campus community life. Contact them directly to get involved.

Baha’i Campus Association
Bob Atkinson, Baha’i Chaplain
- 780-5078 or Atkinson@usm.maine.edu.

Catholic Newman Club
danielle.sabine@maine.edu or
usm_nemanclub@yahoo.com

Hillel (Jewish student organization)
Fae Silverman, Hillel Advisor -
772-1562 or mainehillel@gmail.com

Intervarsity Christian Fellowship
Nathanael Hasbrouck, nathrouck@webryders.net

Muslim Students Association
Mahdiyu.tahlil@maine.edu

Navigators Christian Fellowship
Michael Whitney, Navigators
Director

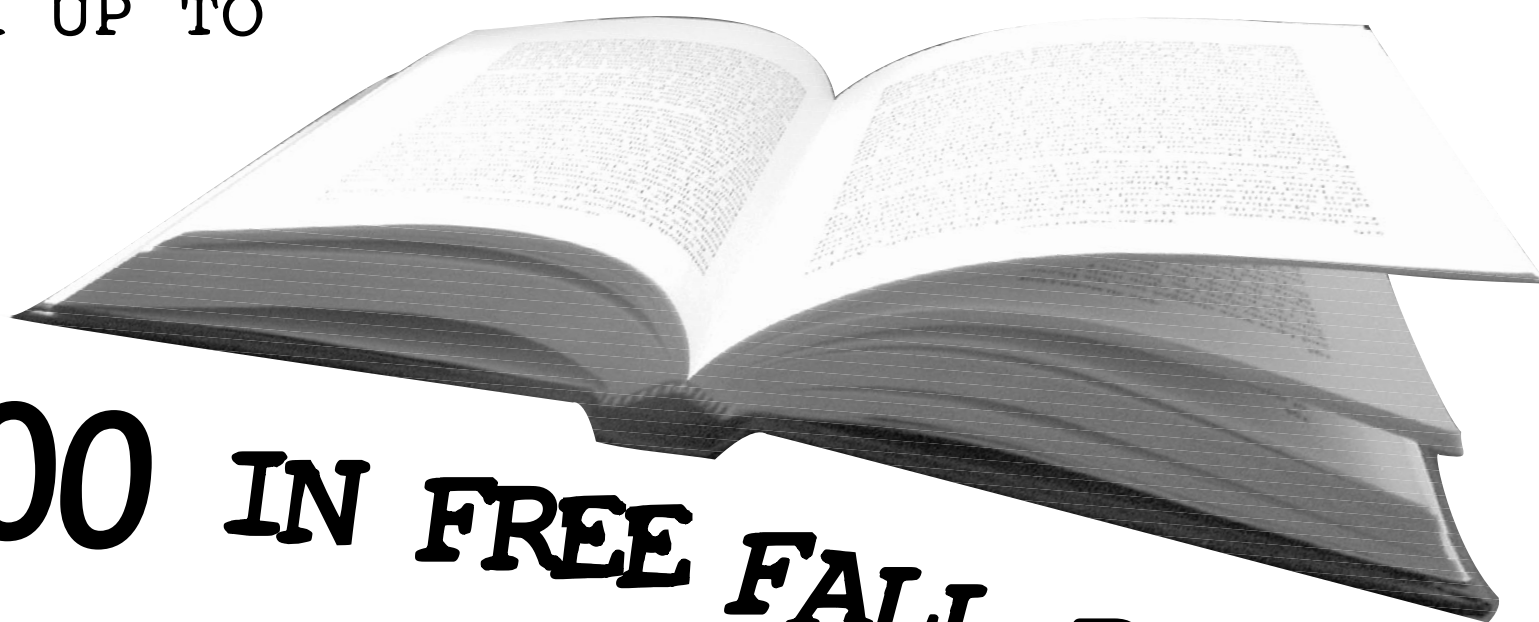
Pagan Students Association
usmpsa@yahoo.com

If no organization of your religious or spiritual tradition exists, you can gather a group and start one. Consult the Chaplains’ office at 228-8093 or the Center for Student Activities & Involvement at 780-4090.

-Courtesy of the interfaith chaplain’s office

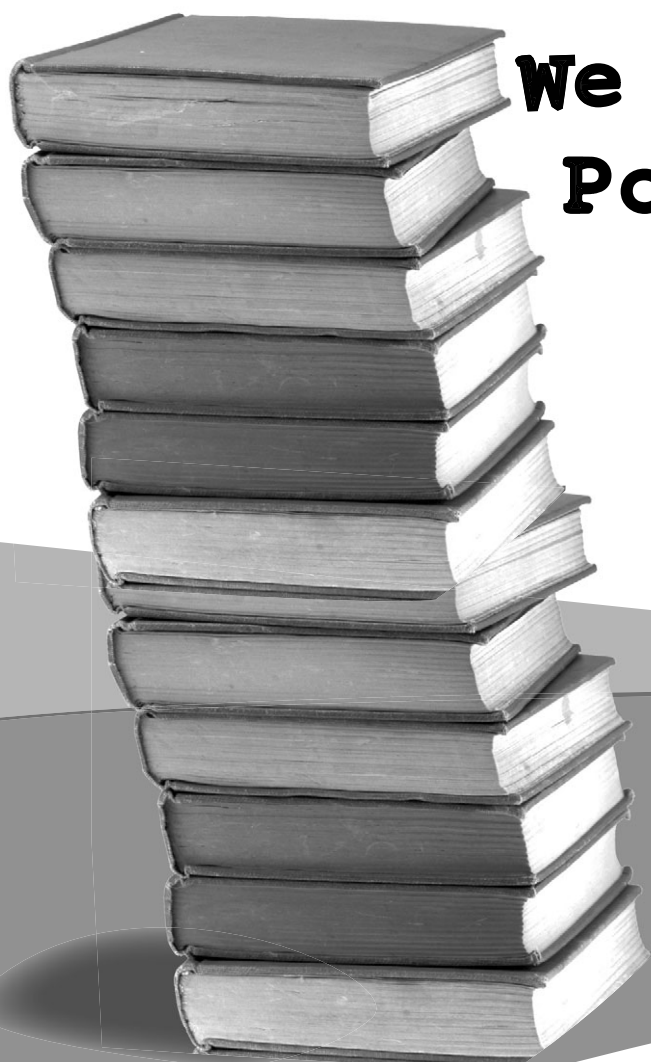
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I'll trade you



STAFF PHOTO BY JARED THURBER

Natalie Ladd, the sales and marketing manager at the Trade Exchange, shows off some of the random things found in the storefront operation. Outside the store, she helps businesses connect and exchange services from a collective pool rather than through monetary exchanges.

The modern way to barter

Jared Thurber

Contributing Writer

Trade is the world's oldest form of commerce, but in today's capitalist society, it has taken a back seat to the monetary system of exchange.

But in Portland, thanks to The Trade Exchange, barter is back, and it's better than ever.

Located on Center Street in Portland, The Trade Exchange acts as a bartering middleman, facilitating trade between area businesses by setting up a credit-based system through which members can exchange goods and services.

"It's great for small businesses with excess inventory or anyone with a product or service that has perceived value," explains Natalie Ladd, the sales and marketing manager at the Trade Exchange.

Photographers, massage therapists, nail technicians, web designers and coffee shops can all benefit from the Trade Exchange.

Restaurants can stimulate business during slow meal times, like lunch, by trading lunch gift certificates for other useful services like carpet cleaning.

To become a member takes investing \$500 worth of your particular product or service into the trade pool; once a member, you can then pull \$500 worth of goods and services from the pool.

This pool feature is what makes the Trade Exchange so useful — instead of trading with just one person, a member can choose what they want from a directory of goods and services.

The directory is like a catalogue of member businesses, including a wide array of services and businesses like D. Cole Jewelers, Bingas Wingas and the Eastland Park Hotel; dry cleaners, law

firms, local auto mechanics, and karate classes.

Even funk/rock band Color Blind can be found in the directory, offering live music.

Established in 1977, Trade Exchange was established as a way to facilitate large-scale trade between local businesses and groups.

According to their website, barter accounts for \$29 billion in sales annually worldwide, and is growing at a rate of 15 percent per year.

The exchange currently has more than 300 member businesses in the area.

Upon joining Trade Exchange, members are given a "trade card" that works like a credit card, allowing them to make purchases at any member merchant, and deducting the cost from their line of invested credit.

The Trade Exchange is not a non-profit organization. While there is no fee paid to the company to enroll in the program, an annual due of \$195 trade dollars is required, as well as a 12 percent commission on all trades.

In this way, the group says it can "generate new business for clients of our exchange network."

There is also a showroom that members can shop in which carries everything from jewelry to Red Sox and Patriots gear.

"We have something for everyone in here," says Ladd as she holds up a solid oak, moose adorned toilet seat "It's like that saying, there's an ass for every seat!"

Does your business, band, or student group have services you might trade? Check out www.thetradeex.change.com or call Natalie Ladd at 800-734-0734. The Free Press joined in April after covering this story.



STOCK PHOTO

The latest distraction

Think cell phones are bad? Try laptops

Laura Fellows

Intern

Three students sit in the back corner of the room, laptops in front of them. As two more amble over, somebody whips out a power strip from their backpack, allowing all five to plug their computers into the nearest outlet. Two begin playing "World of Warcraft", while others simply check their e-mail and surf the web.

Is it a LAN party? A Friday night gaming session? Not quite -- it's a USM classroom.

In a year when many analysts say that laptop computer sales could finally eclipse the sturdy, stationary desktop, it is no wonder that situations like this are becoming more and more common. Many USM buildings are equipped with wireless internet access, allowing students and faculty to connect to the internet across campus without a physical plug-in.

The advantages are obvious -- students can perform extensive research, communicate with one another, find information on classes, meetings, and school happenings -- all while fulfilling an attendance requirement.

So it is also no wonder that this blossoming of technology, sometimes referred to as "ubiquitous computing," may also be causing a backlash.

Much evidence against laptop use in classrooms is simply anecdotal, but an article in the April 2008 issue of the journal "Computers & Education" published results of a recent study which found a negative correlation between laptop use in class, and the overall performance of the students -- including how clear they felt the lecture material to be.

The study also found that more than half of the distractions reported in class were related to laptop use by other students -- those backlit screens, lively videos, and occasional audio alerts that are completely out of their control, just a few feet away.

Many schools have begun integrating laptops into classes, which gives a greater level of control to the professors. In this scenario, laptops can be quite helpful -- but when unregulated, things have a tendency to get out of control.

"I think they should be used more for note-taking in class," says sophomore Erin Nadeau, "but aren't really being used for that." While she occasionally brings her laptop to class, she usually uses it to catch up on homework rather than Facebook.

According to English professor Shelton Waldrep, laptop use in the classroom is "a growing issue." While he admits that laptops can be helpful for quickly finding the answers to questions that may not be available in textbooks, he is beginning to feel uncomfortable with how often they are used.

"The real problem is that the student doesn't make eye contact with me or other students," he says, "and I tend to try to engage students in discussion."

Certain classes typically ban laptop use altogether. In creative writing courses, internet access is often seen as a distraction; many art history classes require the room to be as dark as possible, so that slides can be examined in detail.

Shirley DelSignore, a junior engineering major, believes that laptops themselves aren't the problem -- it depends on the people using them.

"I can type faster than I can write," she says. "I take notes on my laptop, so they're more organized."

Library lends laptops

Did your hard-drive commit suicide? Or just don't have a laptop? Lucky for you, the Glickman Library lends more than just books. You can't bring them to class, but they have several laptops available to borrow for set periods of time, provided they remain in the building.

So if you're sick of the computer lap (or listening to your roommate's music while you're studying for finals), ask for a laptop at the desk in the first floor lobby. All you need is your USM ID.

She says that computers in the classroom are extremely helpful when used correctly, but sees many students using them for games and other things during class. "That, to me, is a total no-no."

The university has no over-riding policy; decisions are left up to individual professors, and most seem to agree that the biggest problem is not the technology itself -- it has a lot more to do with the respect and responsibility of students.

As DelSignore observes, "A lot of kids don't have respect for their professors."

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



After a wonderful, crazy, life-guzzling semester of working on this newspaper, my career in college journalism is coming to a close.

And, after five years of taking leaky buses, questioning Aramark food, wondering when floor tiles would be replaced in various Luther Bonney classrooms and trying to take advantage of every opportunity that came my way, my career as an undergrad is also winding down.

A lot of faculty, administrators and students have been telling me lately that I'm "getting out at the right time," based on the turmoil going on at this university.

On the other side of the spectrum, a lot of professional journalists have been telling me that I'm entering the market at exactly the wrong time – newspapers nationwide are cutting back, and the reporter jobs that have always been competitive have become even more so.

Well, call me naïve – because I likely am – but I'm really not all that worried.

Now, this might sound like a sales pitch (I swear I'm not involved in the new USM marketing campaign), but I really think that my education at this poor, cash-strapped university had a very large role in the comfort I feel leaving it.

What do I mean by education?

It's not about the classes, although they certainly helped by teaching me both how and why to think.

But really, it was the first time I took an incomplete – because it showed me

that no matter how much time I have to do things, I'm not going to feel any more motivated to do things I don't want to.

And it was the time I sprained my ankle in lacrosse and had to trust someone else, every day, to properly and comfortably tape me up so I wouldn't keep doing the same thing over and over again.

How about the time I rode from Gorham to Portland in the passenger seat of a university administrator, and was reminded that no matter what someone's position is, he or she was once wearing your shoes – and probably remembers what they were like (or can at least tell you where to find new ones).

It's definitely the time a teammate lent me her car so that I could drive to my grandfather's funeral, and I crashed it along the way – because no matter how much you screw up, people understand, and things rarely are unmendable.

I can't forget the freshman roommate who was so cool that she somehow convinced me to start smoking – and then the one, horrified look from my best friend that told me I'd better stop, because if I was willing to sacrifice who I was, my best friend wanted nothing to do with me.

Yes, even the first (and only) time my car got the boot, which is a pretty damn good reminder that it's usually best to be responsible all the time, and not just when I need to be.

Though it's probably a cliché, it seems that I've learned far more from my failures than from my successes – although encouragement has certainly helped me along.

This means that, if history stands, I really have nothing to worry about.

If I screw up and find myself in a job or a relationship or a situation that's

not so cool, I'll get out of it someday, and I'll have learned something.

And if the opposite happens, if I find that dream job/man/life, well, that's pretty cool too.

The trick, sometimes, is knowing the difference.


USM has suddenly begun to realize that the great direction it thought it was headed in was more destructive than anyone realized along the way. And, while \$8.2 million is a bigger mistake than I ever hope to make, I think what happens from here on out will come under the context of having learned from it.

Journalism, likewise, has been heading in strange directions, and probably without people or producers even realizing it. It's going to be my job to learn from the errors of others, and to make a few mistakes of my own; to figure out what works and what doesn't as I try out this whole post-college world.

I'm a little afraid to graduate, to be without the "I'm a student" excuse for slacking, but if history stands, slacking a little – and getting a nice kick in the pants reminding me why I shouldn't be – will probably be to my benefit.

So goodbye Free Press and my readers, thanks for keeping me in check when I screwed up too badly, and for occasionally telling me when something was done well.

And goodbye USM. Although to be honest, I'll probably be around – I haven't yet learned that the time to fill out job applications is now...

 Sarah Trent
Executive Editor

Letters to the Editor

A Thank You Note

Dear Student Body,
I just wanted to thank all of the wonderful drivers who park in the Woodbury Campus Center main lot. Over the years my car has sustained a wealth of dings and dents from you parking too close and slamming your door into mine. I recently bought a newer vehicle and within a month received the biggest scratch yet! Just the other day I watched someone slam into someone else's bumper and drive away to find another spot!

I'm just fed up with the general lack of respect for other people and their property. We're all busy and in a hurry to get to class, but that doesn't make it okay to squeeze into a spot that's too small, double park or smack someone's car with yours.

Please try and respect your fellow students and their vehicles.

Emily
Senior

Free Press Never Looked Better!

From 1989-1991 I was the executive editor of the Free Press. We had a bunch of Macs networked and thought desktop-publishing was the greatest invention!

I gotta tell you, when I poke around the Free Press online today I get flashbacks and goosebumps...you are doing such a terrific job with technology we only dreamed of.

Moreover, the print-version of the paper has never looked better. You are doing such a great job!

And remember, as you get ready for finals and field bad criticisms and, most importantly, prepare to pass the torch to an executive editor-to-be, don't let anyone get you down!

Keep up the good work!

Andrew J. Levesque
USM Alumnus

the free press

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GUEST COLUMN

Students must help make USM greener

Jake Chamberlain
Guest Columnist

You may have read in the April 7 issue of the Free Press about USM's attempt to measure its movement towards a sustainable campus through STARS – a new sustainability assessment system.

Students and faculty alike have joined forces in an extremely motivated attempt to figure out where USM has been and where it is going in terms of environmental friendliness. The STARS program measures all aspects of university function and its effects on our environment. Extensive data ranging from green house gas emissions caused by electricity and heating usage to the organic/non-organic food supply at USM has been collected. Being an active student participant of this project, I have been measuring such green house gas emissions from a 2005-06 baseline. The results have been inspiring; however, USM still has a lot of work to do if it wants to reach its goal to be "carbon neutral."

In 2005-06, USM used roughly 19,727,262 kilowatt-hours of electricity. That includes all campuses, outbuildings, rental spaces, etc, and is a whole lot of electricity usage which happened to pump out a great deal of CO₂ (the biggest culprit of the green house gases). In 2007 USM had decreased the amount of electricity used by 3,104,712 kwh.

That is a pretty impressive feat and could be attributed to the large-scale attempt across campus to decrease our environmental footprint. This is not to mention the fact that at least a portion of that electricity was either purchased or produced in the form of green energy, including biomass, hydro and wind.

In addition, USM has undertaken at least seven LEED approved building and remodeling projects, improving the environmental integrity of our facilities. Many of these buildings use energy conservation methods and also pull from alternative energy resources that decrease electricity and fuel purchasing (non renewable, CO₂ emitting resources).

Yet, the fact that, in 2007, USM had still consumed about 16,622,541 KWH of electricity says something about the state of our sustainability: we still have a lot of work to do if we are to obtain our carbon-neutral goal – emitting little to no CO₂ into the atmosphere.

We have been continually expanding our university with sustainability in mind, but if everyone, especially the student population, is not of the same frame of mind, we will never be able to reduce our energy usage enough.

Our administrators have been making great progress, but it's unfair to place this responsibility into their hands alone. We, as students, have to be far more active in the process in order for these goals to be achieved.

And there are resources available for us to so.

Did you know that there is a fund sitting with the environmental sustainability office specifically set aside for student initiated sustainability projects that will demonstrably improve the university's ecological footprint? Any student can tap into this fund as long they have the ambition to do so.

The Honors Student Organization, for example, is in the process of writing a grant proposal for this fund, in order to continue their "Greening the Honor's House" project.

This project is an attempt to assess the environmental impact of the energy consumption at the Honors House (102 Bedford Street) in order to transform the facility into as environmentally friendly a space as it can be.

After having switched all of their incandescent light bulbs to CFLs and making constant efforts to reduce electricity and heat consumption, the Honors group has been working towards dipping into this student sustainability fund in order to push forward some higher intensity projects such as possibly improving the insulation in the building to improve heating efficiency.

If all students take interest such as this, in sustainably improving the facets of university life that they most commonly interact with; or riding their bike to class; or supporting student-driven green campaigns, and so on, we can together, with each other and with our professors and administrators, aid this admirable goal of attaining carbon neutrality at the University of Southern Maine.

Jake Chamberlain is a senior in the Honors Program.

Letters to the Editor, Cont'd

Thank you Free Press

To the editor and staff at the Free Press:

Thank you so much for all your support with calendar listings, articles and terrific reporting on subjects relating to women and gender studies programming, including the wonderful article on Kate Bornstein (Oct. 29), co-curricular events, the Freedom Bus to LAC for a convocation event (April 7), and Thinking Matters (April 21).

Getting the word out to the USM student community is important information, and you all have done a fabulous job!

On behalf of the departments and programs that I have been involved with this academic year, we thank you!

ROCK ON!

Gabe Demaine

Diversity/Scholarship Liaison

Discrimination During UMO Pride Week

A very close friend of ours rented a room at a hotel in Bangor because of the UMO Pride Week drag show, so myself, my sister and our friends all went to the hotel to drop off our stuff and start getting ready in the room. The queens and three Colby students who were doing a project for a class had all come to the room to get ready for the show and film a documentary on the drag community.

It was really warm in the room, so we asked the woman running the desk if the AC was on yet; it was not, but she came to the room to see if the heat was on, then came back to ask why there were so many people in the room. We explained we were going to the Pride Week show at UMaine and she was fine with that.

Then two queens went outside to have a smoke, and came back to find the woman standing there to say we had to leave – other patrons were upset and uncomfortable seeing men in makeup and dresses.

Then she said we were breaking a fire code – which we understood, however the woman had been to the room TWICE before and hadn't said anything about a fire code.

So everyone packed and a few of our friends went to talk to the woman. She wouldn't give us the money back because the room had "already been used" (for two hours!).

The person who rented the room said she wasn't leaving unless she got the room money and key deposit back, so the woman said she was going to call the cops.

Another queen asked to speak with the manager – while the woman called the manager, she told us, "I'm from California, understand this culture and am not prejudice...but this is MAINE..."

The fact that our friends were discriminated against in Bangor, Maine really sickens us.

No one should ever stay at the Bangor Motor Inn - they are unreasonable and unwilling to adapt to circumstances that may make others feel uncomfortable.

If you are a paying customer in a hotel, you should be given the right to privacy of whatever happens in your room.

If you choose to get dressed in drag in a room that you paid good money for, you should not be forced out because you are "different."

Pride Week is about being true to who you are and we don't care if you're from California, Tibet, Maine, Canada, Israel, or wherever. This is discrimination and it should NOT be tolerated.

Ashleigh & Adrian St. Pierre

Senior, USM Musical Theater

Senior, Brunswick High School

Economics 101

To the Right,

If you know anything about macroeconomics, you understand that recessions are caused by the understandable and periodic loss of optimism by the nation's leading business firms. They rationally cut back on capital spending when there is a financial crisis and when sales in the economy decline.

So the people running the economy are periodically pessimistic and that's why the economy sometimes goes into recession. So the idea, stated by Dustin Gilbert in his recent "From the Right" (April 21), is empirically false and shows a complete lack of understanding about basic macroeconomics.

If we had the time, we could enumerate six other such errors in this, but we won't bother.

Secondly, we have never had a truly free market economy.

The major industries of this country, agriculture and railroads, which began the industrial revolution, got their start with huge public investments, like the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862. Huge donations of free land were given to railroads and it was these public (government) investments that started the capitalist system that we know. This is just basic economic history.

Every modern capitalist economy has a large public sector. Without public education we would lack a skilled workforce. Without scientific research conducted by the government we would lack technology. We need publicly provided infrastructure.

Should freemarketers fire all of the air traffic controllers and move to a faith-based air traffic control system? Approximately 500,000 people would die under this scenario, so we're not sure what Gilbert was trying to say. The assertion of the existence of a free market capitalist economy is pure ignorance.

He invokes logic, we invoke knowledge and evidence.

From Reality,

Michael Hillard

Professor of Economics

Molly Dolby

Junior Economics Major

Words & Images

Dear Editor:

I write in response to Jenna Howard's one-sided article "Words + Images published without images" (April 21). I was the managing editor for the 2008 issue.

Last year, Jenna Howard was one of the art editors. It's strange to see her write an article about the deemphasizing of a position she previously held.

It was not simply that "there was not time to enter art" into Adobe InDesign; it was that there was no way for the printer to put work in the middle of the journal after the proofing process, because to do that they would have had to start over from scratch. When the journal needed to go to Penmor, we had not received confirmation letters from all of the artists. This is why we'd hoped to insert the art after the proof, providing more time for responses. (And why didn't she mention the two wonderful covers. Are they not images?)

It's an ignorant thing to say, as Howard does, that the congratulatory letter usually "tells the artist that unless the journal is notified, their initial art submission gives the journal permission to print the work." Really? According to whom? Words and Images accepts simultaneous submissions, and does not require that writers and artists let the journal know when the work is accepted elsewhere. Because they may have been accepted elsewhere, we need to get permission. This is the norm for national literary journals; when I was recently published in one, this was the first thing they asked.

Anyone who picks up the 2008 issue of Words and Images will see that it's the best one in years. It contains work by Kevin Brockmeier, Michael Kimball, Dan Domench, Bill Rasmovicz and USM students Steve Gibbon and Zachary Mosher, and, as Howard said, interviews with film director Todd Field, novelist Richard Rousseau and the band The National.

Especially interesting is the interview with Mr. Rousseau, which contains fascinating insights into his famous books "Empire Falls" and "The Social Contract."

Ryan has apologized to Marie Follayttar for a mistake made. She has apparently not accepted the apology. But this is certainly not front-page material.

If Ms. Follayttar was really so concerned about "contracts not met and whether this made the student activity fee vulnerable to a lawsuit," she should've asked somebody, instead of just feeding her agenda to people who could put this completely one-sided and out of context "story" into print.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Rybeck

FROM THE RIGHT

Change, God and taking action

Dustin Gilbert

My goal with "From the Right" was not to promote argument, but rather to influence change.

Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton and John McCain are always talking about change -- Barack is running his campaign on "change."

Change, however, is not just talking about it. It requires action to actually change what you believe is incorrect, unjust, or unfair.

This column was my way of taking action, and it was prompted by one substantial change in my life: my belief in God.

Over Christmas break I went to North Carolina to visit some old friends, including Jeremiah, the son of a preacher.

When I was still going to school with Jeremiah, he had told me about his church, and I was intrigued. I wanted to see the difference between a southern Baptist church and the Catholic church I was baptized in.

The first time I went, the service was, to say the least, different. There were very few synchronized prayers or rituals. The choir made me feel like I was at a concert.

Then the preaching began...

The preacher, Jeremiah's father, said his word of God like nothing I'd ever seen or heard before. He whispered it, he yelled it and he used analogies to prove His existence.

At the end of the sermon he encouraged those who were in need of savior, forgiveness, and help from the Lord to come up and kneel at the foot of the cross and His pulpit. I didn't go up. I didn't know what to do. I simply observed.

When I went to North Carolina over Christmas, I knew I'd return to Jeremiah's church. I looked forward to it. I looked forward to hearing his father preach and hearing the congregation holler "Amen!" to one of his points.

So I went that first Sunday in Sanford, North Carolina. I listened once again, and once again it struck home; it strengthened my belief in God. But when the time came to kneel below the cross, I froze. I wanted to go up but something held me back.

The next time I went to Jeremiah's church was that same Sunday, in the evening.

Another man preached unlike any other person I had ever seen. He was so emotional, so fired up, so believing that his words were correct that he worked up a sweat. He even got off stage and walked amongst the congregation!

But it wasn't enough to make me go up to the front and bow before the cross and pray. I wanted to, no doubt, but the fact that I was baptized Catholic held me back.

The next Sunday, the same day I'd be attending my first ever Duke Basketball game at Cameron Indoor Stadium, I was saved.

Before I even walked into that church I knew a meeting with God was inevitable.

I listened to the choir; it all had clicked.

I heard a sermon I can't remember because I was only listening for the words that meant it was time to be saved.

When those words came I couldn't get out of that pew fast enough. I had to dodge Jeremiah's brother before I was able to kneel below the cross, the preacher and his entire congregation. As I prayed and begged for forgiveness memories of the all the hell I had raised growing up played like a slide-show. I couldn't help but cry because I felt so bad.

After I stood up I felt the weight of all those sins lift away. I was saved and I can honestly say my body felt physically lighter.

Now before you say "Oh, here's another bible-thumping red-neck/hick," I have to tell you that my belief in God wasn't affirmed until that day. I must also tell you that day changed my life tremendously. It changed the way I act, the way I think and most of all it gave me the ability to forgive and pray meaningfully.

When I pray I look to the stars --right at God -- and I speak aloud when only He is the one who is listening.

My column is one of the results of my new life.

After leaving you, the reader, with this last column, I do not ask you to do the same as I have done. I ask you to consider what I have done and consider if it would work for you.

Changing your life isn't easy, but this change that I made, this event I will never forget, it changed me for the better, made me sure that God exists and helped me understand myself.

Thank you all for reading "From the Right."

I have not decided if I will continue it next year but I ask you to continue reading the Free Press.

I hope you all will consider the ideas and opinions I have contributed.

Dustin Gilbert is compassionate conservative hoping to help his fellow students better understand right-wingers.

Mondays:
✓ Wake up
✓ Check e-mail

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LETTER FROM YOUR STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT



Hello USM Students,

This is your first report from me, Ben Taylor, your new Student Body President. While I'll be working on some things over the summer, I'll save a lot of the important stuff for these letters when we come back in the fall.

Let me first congratulate outgoing Student Body President A.J.

Chalifour on a job well done this year. Even working closely with him all year, I had underestimated the amount of work he put into the position, making valuable connections and working on a myriad of issues. In the past two weeks, I have gotten a glimpse of his work this year, and I can say it will be a hard standard to surpass, although I plan on giving it a go.

There's a lot to be said about this year in general. The university found a new president, the current administration dealt with a budget crisis, and student involvement itself dealt with a lot of difficulties.

However, as someone who has been able to watch all these things develop, I will say I am lucky to come in and be able to work with a fairly clean slate. There are a few carryover items from this year, but for the most part, and due to the hard work of a lot of people this year, I have a long leash in decid-

ing where I can be most useful for the students.

And indeed, I have a good idea of where I plan to put a lot of my efforts. You heard a few times from my predecessor about Change '08, a conference in which involved students from a variety of backgrounds came together to talk about student involvement as a whole. That conference has led to a few successful spin-offs, whose work you will see over the next year and beyond.

More important to me, however, is getting the help and opinions of those who are currently not involved at all. There was a lot of talk last summer about approaching specific groups of students and getting them plugged into involvement activities based on their interests. For instance, a group of marketing and business students would be better trained to set up a series of events which would actually draw people and which

could eventually fundraise enough money to bring a well-known musician or band to campus, and a specific plan is much more likely to draw the attention of these students than simply asking them to "get involved."

There are plenty of opportunities for co-curricular activities, to use the education buzzword, in which students can get involved and help build the university, but also at the same time get to practice the skills they are learning in the classroom. There are also plenty of students interested in other things besides their major, who never see the opportunities to pursue these things because of poor publication of student groups and their events.

I'll leave you with this revelation, which came to me after a meeting about USM's brand image and how it markets itself in the future. Just like the university itself, USM student involvement is a struggling brand. It's not

that involved students don't put in enough work, or that uninvolved students are just apathetic and don't care about USM. It's that some activities just aren't competitive with the alternative, whether that is going out to the Old Port, or even sitting in a dorm room playing video games or watching movies. Those events that are competitive aren't publicized enough.

Even with very limited resources, a little creative thinking can go a long way when thinking about what might be able to compete with a regular Friday night out.

Anyways, I hope all of you have good luck with finals, and have a good summer. I hope to see you all again when we return in the fall.

Sincerely,

Ben Taylor
Student Body President

Introducing . . . The lunch ladies (and gentlemen)

Interviews and photos by Karl Rawstron

You see them day in and day out as you pass by them in the line for sandwiches or the cash register. But do you know who they are? We wandered through Aramark services on both campuses seeking out some of students' favorite cafeteria staff. Not all of them were forthcoming, including everyone's favorite, Jan, in Gorham, who shooed us away. Here are the ones who could bear having a recorder and a camera aimed at them. Interviews are in order of photos, from left to right.

Senayet Shihamit

Title: Supervisor
Home: Westbrook
Aramark tenure: Five years
Past jobs: managing a rent a car company in the United Arab Emirates.
What's your favorite book? Any Agatha Christi book.
And movie? I love action movies.
What do you think about the election season? Let's not go there.
What are your thoughts on spring? Ahh, I wish the whole year was spring. I love it.
What's your favorite food? Ingera (Ethiopian Bread). I make it at home. It's made with Teff flour, which you can't get in the U.S. But I order it on line. It's grown only in Ethiopia.

Brenda Williams

Title: Head Deli Cook
Home: Waterboro
Aramark tenure: Six months
What's your favorite book and movie? Gone with the Wind and Gone with the Wind
What do you think of the election season? Very confused and disappointed, I'm not very impressed with our selection of candidates.
What's your favorite food to make at

work? Pizza
Least favorite? Tuna Fish
Any words of wisdom: My mom always told me that crying only gets you red eyes.

Megan Hebert

Title: Barista, Cashier
Home: Gorham
Aramark tenure: Seven months
What's your favorite book: I don't really read that often. The last book I read was a little kid's book about balloons to the child I was babysitting.
What are your thoughts on spring? I'm really excited for spring. Really, really excited for spring.
Favorite food? Probably potatoes, because you can make them into a whole bunch of different things and they always taste good.
Favorite food to make? Smoothies
Least favorite food to make? When I try to do the grill and I don't know what I'm doing.
Words of wisdom? Stay in school as long as you can and get a degree.

Sandra Deluca

Title: Deli Cook
Home: Portland

Aramark tenure: Eight months
Favorite book? The new book I'm reading 'Eat, Love, and Pray.'
Favorite movie? Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory
What do you think of the election season? I think I'm going to vote for Barack. I think it is time for change.
Favorite food? Chocolate
Least favorite food to make here? Chicken Caesar Wraps
Words of wisdom? I have three 23-year-old sons and they don't even listen to me.

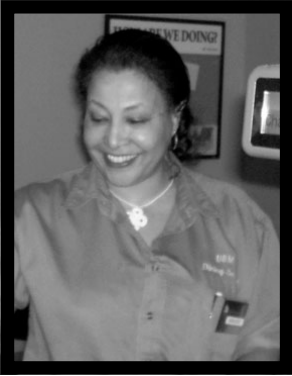
Andy Tukey

Title: Bleeker Chef
Home: Portland
Aramark tenure: Nine months
Favorite book? 'The Jungle' by Upton Sinclair.
Last movie you saw? 'There Will Be Blood' with Daniel Day Lewis
What do you think of the election season? Interesting couple of candidates, Clinton and Obama, but I'm kind of jaded by the whole two-party system.
What are your thoughts on spring? It's a little warm for spring right now. I walk everywhere; I'm surprised that it is already almost 60 degrees out.
Favorite food? Tuna Steak, real rare.
Favorite food to make here? I just like cooking for people, slinging the

plates across and saying how's it going.
Least favorite food to make here? The mushrooms, because everyone else doesn't like how they smell when I cook them and I hear it.

William "Gee" Garrison

Position: Grill Cook
Home: Portland
Aramark tenure: On and off since 1999
What's your favorite book? Basically The Bible. There's more truth to it than anything else I read.
Favorite movie? I'm a James Bond fan.
What do you think of the election season? It's good to have a woman and a minority. It's not the same old same old. I think the way change is, is having a woman and an African American. Could be a change, a good change.
Least favorite food to make here? Mexican, it's good, but I don't like making it.
Any words of wisdom? The way we see things and look at things is not always what we really see. I think love and peace and knowledge is one of the best things we have on this earth if we use it.



Arts & Entertainment

11 The Free Press | April 28, 2008



Jeremy Green, a familiar figure to USM art students, stands in the new location of his art supply store, The Art Guru. He recently moved to Church St. from his old location

STAFF PHOTO BY MARY JONES

Gorham's Art Guru

Mary Jones

Staff Writer

You may have seen him hanging around the art department in Gorham, a tall, lean man with long brown hair and beard to match. He's the Art Guru, who also goes by Jeremy Green. He owns the Art Guru, an artist supply store in Gorham.

Recently, the Guru has been closed and the windows covered up. But not to worry, the store has only moved. It's now located on Church St.

"This I think is a better location," he said. "(Students) don't have to drive."

High rent prompted the move to the new, smaller space. Originally, Green wanted to relocate the store to the first floor apartment of his home, but the town's fire code demanded that he put in a sprinkler system throughout the building. The high cost led him to look elsewhere and he decided on the Church St. location.

The new space is much smaller than the old, but "less daunting" to fill with supplies, he said.

"Guru means teacher," he said, adding that more than just selling supplies, he teaches. He plans to use the first floor apartment as a teaching space, where he hopes to teach subjects like mixed media. He also hopes to turn its three bedrooms into studio space for students.

Conveniently located next to the Center for Movement in downtown Gorham, the space is a stone's throw away from campus. There's a common kitchen with a microwave and fridge. He plans to rent out the rooms for \$200.

Becoming the Guru

Originally from Connecticut, Jeremy Green moved to Portland in 1987 where he began working for Artist Craftsman Supply. There he learned all about the different qualities and types of art tools and mediums. He continued to work there almost continuously until 2004, with a four-year hiatus dedicated to travel.

On a visit home during this break, his motor home took a turn for the worse on Portland's million-dollar bridge -- it broke down, leaving him stranded and homeless.

This loss prompted the need for a more permanent settlement. He purchased a house in Gorham, where he still lives today.

He began working for Artist Craftsman Supply again, traveling around the country looking for new store locations. Eventually ACS gave him the opportunity to set up his own store, under the condition that he'd have to move away from Gorham. With a new home and fiancé, Green wasn't willing to make the move. Soon after, he was fired.

A week and a half later, still unsure of what he was going to do with his life, Green joined the Maine Enterprise Option (MEO) program. MEO helps the unemployed find the jobs they love to do. The program pays for unemployment while the worker looks for work. Instead of getting any job these workers find the job that they want to do, something that they'll stick with in the long run.

See GURU page 17

DON'T STAY HOME

POETRY MONTH
CHECK FOR FLEAS

APRIL 28

Hosted by the English department, is "Believing Shakespeare: Religion in Shakespeare's World and in His Plays." This lecture is by David Scott Kastan of Columbia University, and will be held in the University Events Room. Free and open to the public/ 4:15 to 6:15 p.m./ Glickman Library, Portland campus/ 780-4291

APRIL 29

Tonight USM's College of Arts and Sciences will honor Maine's Poet Laureate, Betsy Sholl. In addition to being a talented poet, Betsy teaches creative writing at USM, and has released several volumes of poetry. 6 to 8 p.m./ University Events Room, Glickman Library, Portland campus/ RSVP: 780-4007

APRIL 30

Close out National Poetry Month at the Portland Public Library with poetry readings, workshops and lectures, including a reading/signing by April Ossmann. Free/ the reading is 12 to 1 p.m./ 5 Monument Square, Portland/ 871-1700

MAY 1

Enjoy live jazz tonight while you dine at JJ's Eatery Too in Old Orchard Beach, featuring solo Jazz performer Richard Marsters. JJ's offers home-cooked food in a relaxed atmosphere, and a full bar. No cover charge/ 7 to 10 p.m./ 12B Old Orchard Street/ 934-0722

MAY 2

Like old things? You might just discover some hidden treasures at SPACE's first Flea market, at the Portland Space: Alternative Arts Venue. You can bargain, eat snacks, and browse through all kinds of vintage items. Free/ 5 to 9 p.m./ 538 Congress Street, Portland/ 828-5600

MAY 3

The Portland Ice Arena skaters present their gala ice show to celebrate the closing of another great season. The performers range from students at the arena to local competitive skaters and guest stars - something for everyone. \$8 adults, \$4 children/ 7 p.m./ 225 Park Avenue Portland/ 774-8553

MAY 4

The Maine Jewish Film Festival's Sixth Annual Holocaust Day will be held at Hannaford Lecture Hall. The events of the day are intended to honor the survivors and provide remembrance for the millions of Holocaust victims. Also featured will be the documentary "I Have Never Forgotten You - The Life and Legacy of Simon Wiesenthal (2007)." Free and open to the public: first-come first-serve/ 11 a.m./ Abromson Center, Portland campus/ 831-7495

Making music in the English department

Ditch ‘critical analysis’ and take Dylan instead

“I’d like to, if I can, simulate the experience of getting lost in the music and finding words to live by.”
- Richard Abrams



Richard Abrams, right, channels his favorite folk troubador, Bob Dylan. Abram teaches a popular class in the English department on Dylan and his roots.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY BRANDON MCKENNEY

Karl Rawstron
Contributing Writer

Richard Abrams teaches Bob Dylan. But not in the department you’d expect – Abrams is an English professor. And Dylan: his poet. His class, one of the many “topics in literature” courses numbered ENG 150, is always popular. We decided to sit down with Abrams and ask about why he loves – and teaches – the classic folk/rock/blues/country artist.

FP: When were you first turned on to Dylan?
Abrams: I was in college at McGill in Montreal; about ’65 I think. I asked a friend of mine, “so what is this with Bob Dylan?” and he said, “he’s a new folk singer who swallows his words.” I thought that was a pretty good description of Dylan, even now. I grew up with folk singers, some of whom went on to become semi-famous. When I was in high school I just loved radio. It took a while for the penny to drop with Dylan. I liked him but I don’t think I was absolutely sold on him. I liked particular songs, ‘Free-wheelin’ was a great album, but not till ‘Bringing It All Back Home,’ that was such a leap on Dylan’s part, I was flabbergasted. You know, you expected different things form a rock career back then. You did not expect fifty year careers.

FP: What did you expect?
Abrams: With Dylan you figured he’d be around for a few years as an influential folk singer, then

he’d crest and then he’d go the way of Elvis Presley and he’d make movies about Hawaii and Las Vegas. You didn’t really expect that a pop singer, someone you could hear on the radio or buy a record of, would be a force influencing national thinking. So the kind of thing that Dylan became was itself a novelty. It wasn’t that he was filling the slot. There was no such creature in American life before this.

FP: Has there been a surge in interest in Dylan with the recent movies coming out?
Abrams: Oh, definitely! It doesn’t hurt that there’s a huge surge in the kinds of things Dylan’s doing. Whoever would’ve thought that he’d do his autobiography? It had best-seller status. Whoever thought he’d do a radio show as a D.J. for old music? It’s the best, most innovative radio show I’ve ever heard. ‘Theme Time Radio Hour,’ on subscription radio, online.

FP: How long have you been offering the Dylan class?
Abrams: Five or six years off and on. It started as a senior seminar, fewer people; they do more of the work, present papers. It’s much easier when you don’t have crowd control problems of 26 people.

FP: Has it always been packed?
Abrams: Absolutely, unfortunately. I get email appeals from people who want to join over the number and they say, “just one over the number?” and little do they realize that they’re number 17 over the number.

FP: Is it true there aren’t any books officially assigned to the class?
Abrams: This is the first time I have not assigned books. I do really like a particular biography, Howard Sounes’ ‘Down the Highway,’ and there’s that other book, ‘Don’t Think Twice it’s Alright,’ but all I do now is make it a recommended reading. To me, I have the feeling that I’m starting things in people’s minds that will continue on for a long time and maybe in the summer time they’ll have time to read that biography. And this is the first time I’ve ever given quizzes on the material. I want the text to be the music. I want people to be absorbed in the music.

FP: What do you mean by absorbed?
Abrams: I grew up with this music and had the experience that nobody in the class has had of waiting for a next album to come and sometimes wondering if there would be a next album or whether Dylan was going to stop producing. It seemed touch-and-go quite a few times in his career. I’d like to, if I can, simulate the experience of getting lost in the music and finding words to live by. As Dylan said in “I and I,” “I’ve made shoes for everyone even you, but I go barefoot.” I

want the music to mean the most to people. I don’t want to encapsulate it as a reading experience.

FP: How has the class changed over the years?
Abrams: I think the really interesting thing about it is it’s changed with students’ attitude about Dylan. He is certainly not a relic anymore. People have a feeling that they are overlapping with a bit of history, serious history.

FP: The title of the class is “Bob Dylan and his American roots.” Tell us about the “roots” part of the class?
Abrams: My idea is that you don’t really understand the past by looking back at it, you have to look forward toward it from what came just before. With regards to the course, there’s just not enough time, but it seems to me pretty important. I feel I do absolutely the bare minimum tracing out, in the first month of the class, the history of American song. I love that part and I would like to expand that, but I have the feeling that most students would rather be doing Dylan and let Dylan spread out. But to me it would be sort of irreverent to not pay tribute to blues, R&B, gospel, protest, country, protest revival and so on.

FP: So you’ve always given three or four writing assignments, do you change them every semester?
Abrams: I’ve modified last year’s for this semester. I’ve given a great deal more direction in the past and I’ve decided I don’t want to do that. I’ll tell you something about this bunch of people in there, you get a very creative and iconoclastic crowd compared to many, many, other classes that I teach as a regulation literature teacher and I want to capitalize on that. I’m hoping that less direction means more creativity.

Abrams Favorite Dylan Album:
Blood On The Tracks

Favorite Dylan song:
“Brownsville Girl and Sad Eyed Lady of the Low Lands”

Three Dylan albums to have:
The Times They Are A-Changin’, Highway 61 Revisited, of course, Blood On The Tracks

ENG 150 Topics in Literature: “Bob Dylan and his American Roots” textbooks (suggested only):
Howard Sounes, “Down the Highway”
Andy Gill, “Don’t Think Twice, It’s Alright”

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THEATER REVIEW



STAFF PHOTO BY BRANDON MCKENNEY

Kate Caouette, left, and Mehan Lenny perform during a dress rehearsal of *Last Easter*. It's a play as much about denial as it is mortality. It showed in Gorham last week.

"Last Easter": Laughing All the Way to the Grave

Alex Merrill

Staff Writer

June is in the late stages of breast cancer, having had an unsuccessful mastectomy and several rounds of chemotherapy.

Her prognosis is grim; yet it is her friends who experience the most difficulty in coming to grips with her mortality.

Bryony Lavery's "Last Easter," staged by the USM department of theatre and directed by theatre faculty member Thomas A. Power, is the story of June (Michele Lee) and her three closest friends: Leah (Megan Leddy), a straightlaced American ex-pat; Joy (Kate Caouette), a gravel voiced lush; and Gash (Derrick Jaques), a drag queen.

Gash in particular displays the most pronounced craving for diversion, whether it be anonymous sex or desperate attempts at humor.

The play is book-ended by the corny jokes that Gash tells; tired little Vaudevillian set-up-and-punchline groaners, which the viewer imagines Gash has culled from his drag show.

The jokes that the Gash character tells create a framing device for "Last Easter"; they are the flimsy artifice that separates the play's glib, privileged characters from the grim reality of their

friend's declaration of defeat after a long battle with cancer.

All of the cast do solid physical work; Lee and Jaques in particular craft compelling physical performances.

Lee displays June's unflagging stoicism and incremental bodily decline in every movement she makes onstage; as her character gets sicker, she shrinks in stature; the audience really believes that she is both dying and coming to terms with her death.

Jaques, sinewy and lithe, has a commanding stage presence as the melodramatic Gash. Leddy does a nice job in a relatively thankless role as Leah, the most earnest of the group of friends, and Caouette has moments when she wields a bottle and intones snide witticisms as if she's channeling Mae West.

It is in the second act, when matters become a great deal more serious, that some cracks in the performers' facades begin to show.

"Last Easter" is as much a play about denial as it is about mortality, and there are scenes in which Caouette and Jaques seem to drop their guards a bit too readily; in certain moments, they are definitely "playing" sad.

This causes the production to become slightly heavy-handed in parts; a major mistake when staging a play with such downbeat subject matter.

However, when Gash and Joy are confronted with the prospect of acting as June's euthanizers, both actors ultimately get back on track. Their mixture of flippancy and genuine love and concern regains equilibrium, and they are able to come to terms with their given roles, even as they flit about and frantically manufacture scenarios far more dramatic than the ones that actually transpire at the play's end.

"Last Easter" boasts a particularly impressive set, designed by junior Bobby Wilcox, with giant bay windows and raised platforms that allow the players and director to utilize a large percentage of the mainstage.

Not an inch of visual space is wasted, and the way in which June's modest apartment is nestled into a small space downstage left creates an effective visual metaphor. Like the character herself, who quietly ponders the ramifications of her fate while her friends cavort and bluster and gnash their teeth, June's flat is unassuming -- a simple set of desk, chairs and a lighting board -- lost among its bombastic surroundings.

If you missed it, you missed it: "Last Easter" closed Sunday April 27. The theater department will resume its regular production schedule next fall.

SUMMER READING

Your professor's book pile

Professor Matthew Killmeier

Communication & Media Studies
Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser
"Great book, especially for those familiar with the movie. It's a non-fiction that links agriculture to business"

Homage to Catalonia by George Orwell

"I would recommend this book particularly to students in communication and media studies. It's a story about the Spanish civil war from an insider's perspective. Very relevant to today."



The last issue of the semester wouldn't be complete without dreams of the rest and relaxation that USM students are yearning for. Here is a list of books for your travels, your beach bag, or to join you in that hammock.

Professor Ronald Schmidt

Political Science, Honors
This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War by Drew Gilpin Faust

"This is what I'm planning on reading. It's about the private and nationalist ceremonies by which Americans tried to deal with the unprecedented level of death involved in the Civil War."

Mark Danner's Torture and Truth

"I'm reading it this summer for my own research. It is an examination of the policy decisions that led to a policy of torture in the 'War on Terror.'"

What I Loved by Siri Hustvedt

"It's terrific -- a novel about the relationship between two families, that deals with art, ideas, tragedy and New York City nightlife in the late '70s and early '80s. A brief summary can't really do it justice -- it's just amazing."



Professor Juris Urbans

Art Department

Antonio Lopez Garcia Drawings/ Paintings/ Sculpture by multiple authors; published by Rizzoli.

"A wonderful overview of the work of this great (but little-known in the U.S.), 72-year-old Spanish artist. He has a show up right now through July 27, at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston."

Vija Celmins published by Phaidon

"Celmins is probably the most famous Latvian-born artist in the world. She has lectured and been (an art) juror at USM."

A Nervous Splendor - Vienna 1888-89; by Frederic Morton, published by Penguin

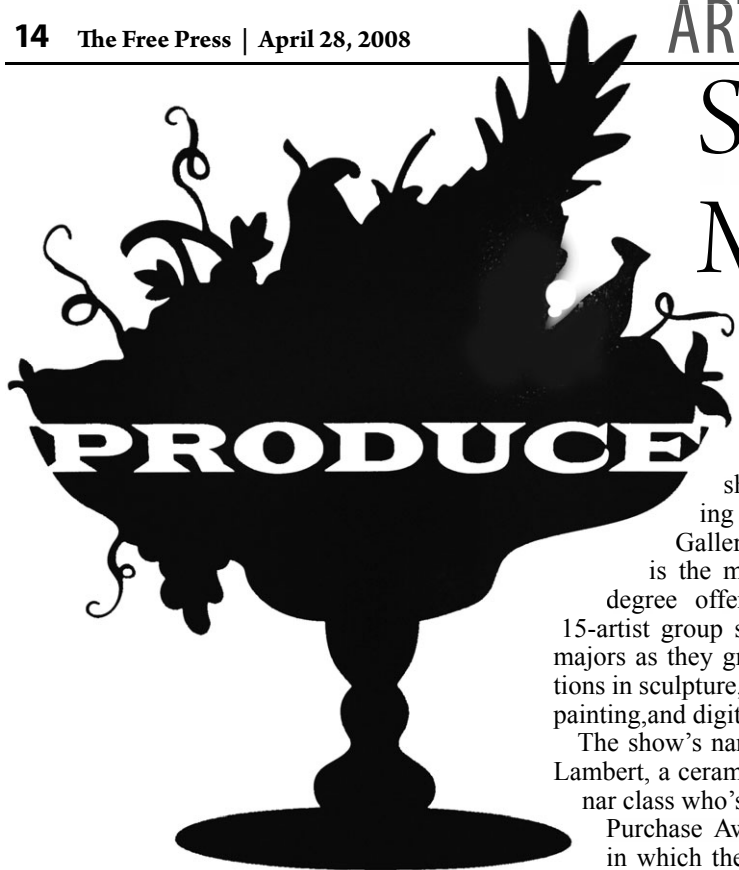
"A more normal, very readable book, it is about fin-de-siecle Vienna, and the artistic and intellectual talents among them Sigmund Freud, Gustav Mahler, Arthur Schnitzler, and Gustav Klimt, who made a new world in the transition to the 20th century.

This is also a book that you can take with you on an airplane."

Compiled by Jenna Howard

Senior show gets critique by Maine curators, profs

Jenna Howard
Arts Editor



The annual Bachelor of Fine Art student show, Produce, is showing at the Gorham Art Gallery now. The BFA degree is the most involved studio art degree offered at USM, and the 15-artist group show showcases the art majors as they graduate from concentrations in sculpture, ceramics, photography, painting, and digital art.

The show's name was the idea of Ben Lambert, a ceramicist in the senior seminar class who's art was selected for the Purchase Award, a yearly tradition in which the office of the president buys a piece of art. Joe Wood selected one of Lambert's wheel-thrown and hand built earthenware "specimens" of a squid-chicken.

Produce can imply both process and product, important parts of the artist's process. It seemed a perfect title for the show.

The four years (or more) of these contemporary artists' early careers, evidenced in their learned processes, and culminated in the products of their creation don the walls of the Gorham Art Gallery.

Traditionally, this show sends off the art department graduates, with the student's final critiques open to the public.

A guest panel of local professionals is invited to criticize the student's work, to prod and ask the artists questions. This week, the panel was Bruce Brown, curator Emeritus of the Center for Maine Contemporary Art; Susan Danly, curator of photography and contemporary art at the Portland Museum of Art; and, Deborah Wing Sproul, assistant professor of sculpture at MECA.

The "cold critique" begins with questions and impressions from the audience without hearing the artist statement or any opening comments from the artist. This way, the artist can see from the viewer's standpoint, instead of vice versa, and is challenged to answer questions regarding technique, choice, subject matter—or anything concerning the presentation of their work.

This week, the art focused on was portraiture investigating social discourse. Brianna Allen, Jessica Northgraves, Justin Levesque, Teressa MacHugh and Mariah Wiggen each had a half hour of spotlight, critique and a chance to ask their viewers for feedback and insight.

To see these works for yourself, the gallery is open from Tuesday-Friday, 11am - 4pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 1pm - 4pm. The next and final critique will be held Thursday, May 1 at 4:30.



Students, faculty, and community members gathered for the art show Produce, a BFA thesis exhibition for senior art majors.



A woman admires Mariah Wiggen's photography during the packed opening of Produce, USM's BFA show.

STAFF PHOTOS BY BRANDON MCKENNEY

The artists

Brianna Allen spoke proudly. Her paintings, a series of five portraits against a dark gray wall, depict members of her family using color and a certain level of emotion to broadcast the relationship of the sitter to the painter, and her impression of the model's personality. The panel marveled over the gesture and expressions she created. Working from life is Brianna's focus, she says.

And she will continue it after graduation, when she plans to move to Alaska to paint portraits of tribal peoples. She hopes to stretch her subject from her personal relationship to them, to show their relationships to others or to their culture.

Her painting professor, Richard Lethem Brown, responded to her work by saying that "her exuberance in handling paint is vital and rare." It is obvious from her paintings: she loves to paint.

Teressa MacHugh's photographs in random order and sizes might depict dirty drunken nights of youth, but they're alongside beautiful quiet moments that appear to fit perfectly, and add a timeless quality to a wall of her 17 selected photographs.

The images are literally snapshots of her life. She writes in her artist statement "I don't get up until about 2 p.m. I spend the next few hours searching for something or someplace to eat. I spend my nights with the people I

cherish. These are photographs of those times."

While Susan Danly, curator of graphics and photography at the Portland Museum of Art saw the wall of random photos as "a certain approach to life" in which life didn't appear easy, Deborah Wing Sproul said that "raw quality" was most intriguing.

Six months of photography was narrowed down to these images, which range from the sweaty chest of a man playing guitar in a club to someone on the very edge of a roof in an orange-lit snowfall. When asked why she didn't frame the pieces, students from the class reiterated the fact that in a sequence of many captured moments, fast-moving images, the instantaneous images were best displayed as impulsively as they were shot. Doug Lakota, her classmate, finished with the remark that from the little he knew her, "her images are her capture of life, rather than a cinematic fad."

Justin Levesque meant to bring together two communities in an exchange on the human experience, on pain, and on coping with it, in "The Waiting Room." His life as a member of the art community and the hemophilic community come together in the body of work presented. His installation includes a sleek shelf from a doctor's office, upon which are jars full of printed cards. The

viewers were instructed to 'draw where it hurts' on a card and to trade it for a card from the bottom shelf. These cards featured different colors representing different bruises. The interactive shelf was paired with portraits of hemophiliacs on the walls and photographs of their used gauze.

Through the touching, taking aspect of the project, juxtaposed against the doctor's office setting and an art gallery, both places where touching is off-limits, Justin encouraged a community of hands-on in an otherwise sterile world of hemophilia.

The panel encouraged these concepts to be pushed into one another: community, conditions, interaction; by literally pushing the shelf closer to the photographs of patients in natural surroundings, and unifying the shelving with the frames. Justin is the only student in the show who is not a senior; he has another year of work before graduating.

Jessica Northgraves says she is a portrait photographer. But her final project is not of people, at least, not at first. On one wall, she displays large black and white photos of rooms. Empty rooms. There are shots of beds that look like they've been slept in, rugs that look like they've been stepped on, and nails that could've just been nailed into the wall—or, that have been there for decades.

Older architecture seems to warp, and patterned wallpaper appears aged.

"Wallpaper" is the title of the work, which includes another wall, painted black, and a small, pillowed shelf holds lockets open to photos of people. They are the people with connection to the rooms. Deborah Wing Sproul said she wanted to feel her own connection to the rooms, not see the actual owners of the space. She preferred to be left to imagine the spaces as a place she could crawl into herself. And feel the textured wallpapers, and bed frames and crooked doorways and rugs.

Mariah Wiggen showcased six mounted photographs of herself wearing a white mask. One is of her painting in a studio, one shows her bartending at a Mexican restaurant. In one, she is under a man having sex. In another, she is hugging her sister in a kitchen. She is looking directly at the camera each time and means to send a message about the roles she chooses to take, as a woman.

By wearing the mask, which the panel found interesting and pressing on many levels, she was drawing attention to her role in what could've otherwise been ordinary photographs of ordinary situations.

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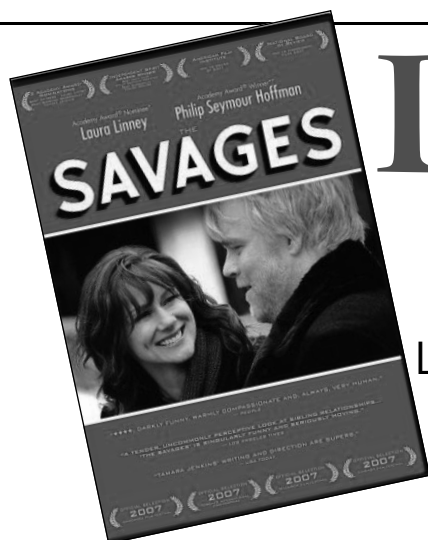
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DVD BATTLE

Hoff off!

Philip Semour Hoffman. Is there anything he isn't in?
Let us help you decide between his two latest efforts to hit DVD.

By David O'Donnell

VS.



The Savages

Fox Searchlight Pictures
Directed by Tamara Jenkins

Charlie Wilson's War

Universal Pictures
Directed by Mike Nichols

Unfairly speaking, every generation has its signature style of film.

The 1970s: gritty, grimy, orange, and fascinated with the streets of New York City.

In the 1980s, characters cleaned up and moved out to Los Angeles. There were really loud synthesizer scores, and problems were worked out during montages set to your favorite '80s pop songs. And it was good.

If we were to settle on a template for our generation, my vote has to go to stuff like *The Savages*. Beautiful, stiff, and clever stuff; peppered with obscure and delicate little folk songs; more sterile than a laboratory.

In this installment of melancholy indie movie, Jon and Wendy Savage are depressed intellectuals, who upon taking brief pauses from their lives, realize that their dad has become very old and senile. There are many vague hints that he was only a slightly better parent than their mother, and she abandoned them as small children.

Just in time, father Savage's elderly girlfriend suddenly drops dead at the beauty salon.

The onus is now on his detached children to either take him in, or find the cheapest retirement home that their consciences will allow.

From the snappy trailer to the poster art by graphic novelist Chris Ware, *The Savages* was blatantly advertised as another quirky indie comedy about highly educated and emotionally damaged individuals -- exactly what it turns out to be.

In one instance of coping with the darkness, Wendy (Laura Linney) is having passionless sex with her married boyfriend; while he makes love to her, she blankly stares around the room. Seeing that his dog happens to be lying next to them on the bed, she makes the creepy decision to reach out and hold his paw.

The emptiness. The despair. Are we nothing more than... animals?

When it comes to upper-class white angst, I will take Bill Murray mentally undressing Scarlett Johansson any day over having to see that angst.

I never thought I'd say this, but maybe there aren't enough political movies.

You gather up the stars, a good director and a dramatic real-life situation -- and you pretty much have something by default. Think of the hundreds of already established characters there are to work with.

Charlie Wilson's War tests this theory rigorously. It doesn't have much of a beginning or an ending -- it's just a giant middle.

But not a bad middle. It successfully taps into the part of us that knows our government has been bought and paid for, but doesn't totally believe it. Maybe it's just very lazy and shambolic?

Or maybe the price tag is lower than we think.

According to the history presented here, Texas congressman Charlie Wilson (Tom Hanks) noticed a turban-capped Dan Rather reporting from Afghanistan, as the Soviets threatened to take over the country.

Along comes a wealthy Houston socialite (Julia Roberts), who lures him -- with sex and money -- into pushing the United States to seriously back the Afghan fighters. We don't fully explore her motives, but are led to believe that she's on a purely personal and religious mission.

On the other side, Hoffman plays an equally frustrated CIA agent ready to grease all the wheels.

The bittersweet ending is well-known: the Afghans successfully fought off the Soviets, but it opened the door to leaders like Osama Bin Laden; in the end, the U.S. could not make the commitment to the region that it needed to. The honeymoon was extremely short, leaving the people of Afghanistan free, poor and in a pile of rubble.

Charlie Wilson's War is only concerned with everything right up to the point where it goes wrong, so it is safe to be a dark comedy. The movie is funny and educational enough to look past the awful southern accents from Roberts and Hanks. The legendary bachelor congressman is portrayed as smart, adventurous and always fairly drunk.

It's funny how comforting that can be, considering the alternatives.

The Winner...

Charlie Wilson by a long shot. It is incomplete, but seeing as it's based on what must be a very interesting book -- at least it doesn't ruin it for you. Now let's just sit back and wait for Oliver Stone's George W. Bush movie.

BRANDON'S BREW REVIEW

"Summer Ale Showdown"

Summertime and beer go together like peanut butter and jelly. What's better than relaxing at a camp fire with a group of friends enjoying a nice summer ale?

Since this will be my last brew review for the year, I thought I'd send you into summer with an idea of a few choice summer offerings from some local breweries.

First up is Casco Bay's summer ale, a newer brew that's only been on the shelves for a few years. A typical American blonde ale, this beer is light and smooth all the way through. It's a light golden brown color and has a crisp taste on the palate. Nothing exciting here, but nothing bad either. A perfectly acceptable blonde and a decent choice for summer.

Next in line we have Samuel Adams with their pale wheat summer ale. You can smell the wheat and a bit of lemon hint straight from the bottle. These qualities in the taste as well, with a bit of a sweet malty flavor. The carbonation is just right and it's light enough to be quite enjoyable. The drinkability of this summer ale is good and I'd recommend it as a solid contender.

Then we have Gritty's with their Vacationland Summer Ale, a pale offering to go with all that spicy food this summer. The bitterness and wheat will set it apart from the other summer ales, but not in a bad way. This is a solid pale, with good balance of wheat and hop in the taste. It's crisp and surprisingly smooth, and leaves a bit of a dry aftertaste. Again, nothing spectacular here but a respectable beer I wouldn't think twice about buying some this summer.

Next up is Shipyard with another pale ale. The pilsner's hops are up front and noticeable, and the beer is actually not too overpowering. It's crisp and is medium bodied with a malt taste at first and a bit of floral aftertaste. Shipyard always makes a decent beer, but I can't say I'm ever satisfied after having one. It's a solid representation of the style and perfectly acceptable for a summer six pack, but I'd look elsewhere first.

Finally we have Geary's Summer, in the style of a Kölsch. It has a sweet and earthy flavor to it, almost buttery, really. It's not what I would regard as a typical Kölsch, but I'll let it slide because I enjoy the beer nonetheless.



The hops and malt are rounded out smoothly with a caramel-like taste and it doesn't have the same macro-like flavoring of other summer ales. I'll certainly be drinking some of this over the next few months.

All of these beers are decent summer ales and most beer drinkers will be perfectly satisfied with a six pack of them. They are all very drinkable, although nothing too surprising from any of them. If I had to choose a winner I'd go with Casco Bay. It's light enough to throw back a few with some food on the grill this summer. Geary's would be a close second for a single beer. All in all, these beers are decent and are worth a try. Enjoy the summer and drink safely my friends!

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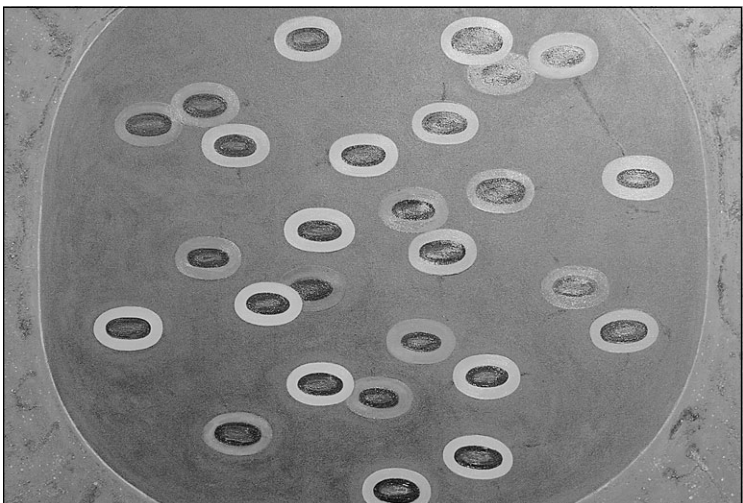


*Congratulations
to USM
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STAFF PHOTO BY BRANDON MCKENNEY

Detail of a painting currently showing in the alumni show in the Area Gallery of Portland's Woodbury Campus Center.

Drawn to Abstraction

Alumni artists in Area Gallery

Mary Jones
Staff Writer

Three alumni of different decades are being featured this month at the Area Gallery in Portland's Woodbury Campus Center. The show, "Drawn to Abstraction," features various levels of abstract art. Featured are Wolcott Dodge, '86, Sean Hasey, '97, and Ryan Wight '07. "We try to do alumni shows every few years to keep in touch with and support our alumni," said Carolyn Eyler, director of exhibitions and programs for the Art Department. Dodge's fifteen paintings/col-lages were inspired from the geo-metric designs of mass-produced flooring. His own designs are often combined with real floor coverings as he explores the rela-tionships between the unique and ordinary. "I find I like the idea that the viewer experiences the various el-ements of the piece in succession, seemingly across time," he said of the result. Dodge currently lives in Portland and earned his MFA at Vermont College. Hasey focuses his work on a set of knives. Seen throughout

his paintings are the knives, often loosely represented and very ges-ture-like creating a tension within the canvas space. "By embracing the certainty of uncertainty I find my life begin-ning to take shape," he said, "and within this paradox I find my arts begin to flourish." Hasey has re-cently moved back to Portland from New York City. Wight uses a mixture of sand, dirt and paint as he explores the natural relationships of gravity, reproduction and lineage. "The shapes and colors I use are devel-oped from studies on organic ma-terials surrounding me; plants, and animals are a few of my studied subjects," he said. After graduation Wight was selected for a Monhegan Artist's Residency. The works shown at the Area Gallery were conceptual-ized during his stay on the island. Since then Wight has worked as a carpenter as he continues his art. His advice to graduating stu-dents is that "it's just really im-portant to just have a space where you can focus on your work, es-pecially when you're on your own time." *Drawn to Abstraction is up until Monday, May 4th.*

Horoscopes

By the Free Press Staff

Taurus
April 21-May 20
Hot Pepper
You are a bit proud of yourself for a minor accomplish-ment this week. Stay tuned in and remember there are still hurdles ahead of you, and while you may feel relieved, it is important to keep your eyes on the prize. This week, give your teacher an apple if you'd give them a hot pepper on ratemyprofessor.com.

Gemini
May 21-June 20
Movin' On
Shake it off, and know that what awaits you is more ful-filling than current events. Be prepared to stake claims and mark territory, but if you get defeated, take it as a sign to move on. This week, offer to help someone – it will help build yourself up.

Cancer
June 21-July 21
What's this feeling?
You craaazy. The stars can't help but to align causing funny feelings inside you, and this is okay. Friends may mistake changes in your life for changes in who you are. Stay strong in conflict-resolution, lest those ch-ch-changes be what defines you. This week, gather with a group to celebrate new direc-tion.

Leo
July 22-August 21
Wide open spaces
A recent decision has left you feeling like the future is yours. With confidence, you should attempt the first move or wow an authority figure with your skills. It's never too late to attempt an apology, either. This week, consider a reunion.

Virgo
August 22- September 21
Hey, tough guy
Dabbling in the unknown may tickle your fancy, but you are welcome to let your inhibitions show through. The toughest guy isn't always the strongest. Your hard work this week will pay off. This week, offer to babysit.

Libra
September 22- October 21
Out of breath
You deserve great things, but you must chase those things with an oversized net to secure them. Run around and grab the thing you want, even if you need to stop and catch your breath every once in a while. This week, invite an acquaintance out and become friends.

Scorpio
October 22- November 21
Karma's gonna getcha
What goes around comes around to you this week. If you've been burning the candle at both ends, prepare to collapse; if you've been rescuing kittens in trees, that karma will catch up to you. Take small chances, baby steps, and get through the week.

Sagittarius
November 22-December 21
Reach out
Reach out big time. Others find that they want and need you, and it's no time to turn your back. In the midst of your own endeavors, be aware of the little joys in your life and what you must do to promote the well-being of those 'others.' This week, try being someone's secret admirer.

Capricorn
December 22- January 19
Warned you
The repercussions of your actions hit home now. And nobody said they didn't warn you, even you did a little self-warning. Instead of covering your tracks, make up for your deeds by sowing the seeds of love. Or, well, do something good to make good. This week, drink earl gray tea with honey and a splash of milk.

Aquarius
January 20-February 18
Happy endings
Your nature beckons in a positive end of the semester. It is your personality and your state of mind that will guide you through the next few weeks, and if you stick to your gun, you will see happy endings. This week, try a science experiment.

Pisces
February 19-March 20
No Time Like the Past
You may be distracted this week with commitments that should take a back seat, but you can't keep your mind off yesterday. The time you take absorbed in elsewhere may get in the way of the here and now. This week, get yourself travel-ready.

Aries
March 21-April 20
Walk on
Take care. Stresses abound, and you must take your responsibilities one at a time to succeed the way you want to. Giving up in the midst of a struggle will result in failure. So be prepared to be diligent this week, and you will be rewarded when it is all said and done. This week, spend time enjoying the spring.



The Art Guru used to be located here, in the Gorham Village Mall. The store recently relocated to Church St., where owner Jeremy Green can save money and be even more convenient to students.

STAFF PHOTO BY BRANDON MCKENNEY

Art Guru changes location

See GURU page 11

It was Debé Loughlin, a staff member in the USM Art Department, who first solidified Green's idea of starting his own store. When she pointed out a space in the Gorham Village Mall, things began to fall into place. The store, Art Guru, opened its doors in 2004. About starting his own busi-ness? "I was comfortable with it. I no longer had to work under a boss. I got to do what I wanted," he said. His previous relationships with USM professors from working at Artist Craftsman Supply helped spread the word to students. Less than minutes by car from campus, the Art Guru became a convenient stop for all. Now, he hopes, it's even more convenient.

The Art Guru provides a wide range of art supplies. They're also known for their funky gifts and cards good for birthdays or the random party favor. They also boast a framing service with a large selection of frames.

All USM students get a dis-count of 10 percent on art sup-plies. The store is open Monday thru Saturday, with times ranging between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Art and "ego issues"

Though both his degrees are in printmaking, one from Keene State and the other from MECA, Jeremy Green, the "Art Guru," now considers himself a mixed media painter. He dabbled for a while in oil but now uses mat acrylics. He starts with a base of this paint and then adds on top. "Anything goes over that and it's very freeing if you don't like it," he said. Soon, Green hopes to exhibit work he and his fiancé have

been working on. Starting last year the pair began working on a collaborative project. At the beginning of the week each artist takes a canvas and spends a half hour on it. The next day they switch canvases and spend another half hour working them. The process continues till the end of the week when they begin anew. "As an artist," he said, "there's an ego issue that goes away when you do collab-orative work."

Balancing the

Jared Thurber, Gwen Merrick, Leah Peabbles, Tyler Jackson, Meagan Dobson and editor Sarah Trent were members of Matt Killmeier's newswriting and reporting class this semester.

No one safe from scrutiny

From BUDGET page 1

contrast between definitions of a workable budget, is: if the past administration upheld proper budgeting practices, would USM be struggling to balance this deficit?

Interim President Joe Wood says that other factors were involved.

"Some of the problem is due to the way in which the budget was handled," he said, "but it is still the case that we are teaching fewer credit hours."

According to enrollment reports published by USM's office of information reporting, from fall 2005 to fall 2006, credit hours decreased by 1,100.

Based on the 2006 in-state tuition rate of \$180 per credit, that totaled a loss of just under \$200,000. If the loss of credit

hours followed the general distribution of students – meaning that 9 percent were paying out-of-state tuition, that number is closer to \$230,000 lost over one year – and enrollment has been decreasing steadily since 2004.

But, that \$230,000 loss seems small up against the near \$388,000 deficit of the president's office alone.

"When the Pricewaterhouse-Coopers audit came out it almost angered you to learn that there really was no budget," said AJ Chalifour, the '07-08 student body president. Agreeing with many others, he thinks that some of USM's budget troubles could have been avoided via better budgeting methods.

Many of the recommendations made by Pricewaterhouse-Coopers are already being put into practice at USM.

Implementing an annual budgeting process as well as requiring monthly actual-to-budget reports for all departments is now happening.

But changing those methods won't balance the budget itself – nearly every department has been forced to implement layoffs and pay cuts.

Including the president's office.

"As of right now, I am considered professional employee," says O'Brien. "My salary is \$47,000 per year." As of Sept. 1, he said, he'll become a classified staff.

Meaning?

He'll go back to being paid by the hour.

Anticipating lay-offs

Professional staff feel in the dark, prepare for job cuts

Gwen Merrick

Contributing Writer

Cuts are coming.

But the general feeling among USM's professional staff is that 'we're grown-ups, we can take it.' Looking toward July 1, on which date many of them might be losing their jobs in USM's effort to cut nearly \$7 million from next year's budget, they're wishing only to be given time to prepare for the worst, rather than be left in the dark.

With another round of job cuts looming, USM is taking steps to soften the blow for employees, but it seems that what many of them want is communication.

"People can be more forgiving if they trust that their supervisors aren't keeping secrets from them," said one professional staff member, who did not want to be identified for fear of further jeopardizing her job. "Not knowing what the next step is going to be for survival is the hardest part."

USM's professional staff work in offices across campus. They are salaried employees, whose job titles range from administrative assistant to accountant. They earn more than most classified staff, who work for hourly wages, but unlike faculty, they can't earn tenure – which means that, looking at budget cuts in the multi-millions, they anticipate taking the brunt of the cuts.

Interim President Joe Wood has announced the possibility of laying off as many as 30 people by July 1. But according to Dan Rabata, the human resources director of employee benefits, the university is negotiating something new for this round of layoffs.

USM has negotiated a contract with the human resource consulting firm, Drake Inglesi Milardo, Inc. to offer services to some employees who are facing job loss. Employees with at least five years of continuous regular employment at USM and who are working at least half-time are eligible to meet with the outside firm for two months to work on everything from resume-building and job searches to in-depth counseling and testing for new career opportunities.

The normal fee for these services provided by Drake Inglesi Milardo, Inc. is \$2500, but the lower rate of \$1500 was obtained through negotiation and the firm's desire to help the university at this difficult period.

"Judy Ryan [vice president for HR and planning] and I were looking for added ways to help employees deal with the stress and difficulties of layoff. We decided

on this approach, got the necessary approvals and are moving ahead with it," Rabata said.

Michelle Drucker, USM's HR director of leadership and organization development, works with USM's employee assistance program. Through this program, Drucker helped to organize a seminar for all USM supervisors, managers and directors on issues that arise during downsizing.

"It's the uncertainty of the situation that's often the hardest. We're trying to help with that," Drucker said. The seminar offered information on how to handle reactions from laid-off employees as well as remaining employees, how to conduct lay-off meetings and how to support remaining employees and minimize adverse effects.

One employee who attended the seminar said that the information was very valuable, "but we don't know where the cuts are going to come from, so the whole time I was there I was wondering if I was even going to have to use this training, and just hoping that I wouldn't."

Beth Higgins, director of advising services at USM, says morale in her department.

"Naturally, my staff reads the paper, and are somewhat concerned about their jobs and their students," Higgins said. "It's my responsibility to touch base with them and work to identify what we can do. Right now, everyone just has the intention of success with the students in mind."

Few professional staff were willing to be identified by the press – but all felt similarly that morale is lower than people in Higgins's position seem to suggest. Employees are nervous, they say, adding that the lack of information is a breeding ground for mistrust and rumors. All were afraid of pushing the envelope one centimeter too far by talking to the newspaper, and being put on "the list."

"Everyone is feeling similar emotions," one staff member said. "Anxiety, frustration from lack of information and wondering when the other shoe is going to drop."

Ultimately, the assistant's position was cut in an effort to save the program, but both supervisor and employee had felt prepared.

"I told her as soon as I knew that her position was being examined so that she would have time to prepare," Higgins said.

"We were ready," Higgins said. "We grieved, but she didn't collapse with the news. It just seems like a more humane way to deal with it, and there's no reason why this can't be done on a more consistent basis."

Picking the "low-hanging fruit"

Hiring freeze has cut 60 positions, \$2.7 million

Tyler Jackson

Staff Writer

In an attempt to eliminate USM's debt, which has risen to the latest figure of \$8.2 million, the university implemented a hiring freeze which, to date, has removed nearly 60 positions and \$2.7 million from the institution and its budget.

The administration is using the hiring freeze as a mechanism that allows for review of every position that opens up, and lets them decide if the job is central enough to the university's mission to rehire.

The hiring freeze has been implemented in two main waves. The first was between Sept. 1, 2006 and July 1, 2007. Within that time period, a total of 30 vacant positions were not refilled.

The second section of the hiring freeze began on July 1, 2007, and is still in progress. Since then, a total of 28.9 vacant positions have not been refilled, some due to layoffs, others from retirements.

The unfilled positions in the second round of the freeze have included administrative assistants, child care employees, assistant teachers, three lecturers

not under contract, custodians and four retired positions.

Dan Rabata, director of employment and compensation, said layoffs will be a last-resort option, and that in some cases, people will be asked to cut back their schedule to part-time or to work a part-year schedule, taking a month or two off, unpaid, in the summer.

"As you can imagine, when you have a freeze going on, you don't always have people leaving the positions you would like (lost), if you were going in and just evaluating which ones you could do without," Rabata said. "It's a very challenging environment, because if somebody leaves and their position is not re-filled, you have to be very creative about how you're going to cover the work."

Provost Mark Lapping refers to this as picking "low-hanging fruit," and considers the opportunistic, rather than strategic, cuts to be unfortunate.

Each time a department wants to re-fill a vacant position, the vice president or equivalent of that department must submit a detailed justification in writing to convince Lapping, HR vice-president Judy Ryan and chief financial officer Dick Campbell that the vacant position deserves special treatment.

Four criteria are considered when reviewing the positions: that it is a revenue-producing job, such as an exercise instructor who teaches paid classes and collects more than the position costs; positions needed to protect health and safety; jobs essential for legal and compliance reasons; and jobs which are critical to the mission of the university.

Lapping says the three-person committee is a case of putting together a small group that could act relatively quickly. Joe Wood has been included in the past two meetings, but has not gone in the past due to his demanding schedule.

The meetings deal with the vacant position applications that have come in that week, typically three or four. Sometimes, a position has to be filled or reviewed very quickly, and a meeting will occur on an impromptu basis.

The university says the hiring freeze has saved a total of \$2.7 million since its initial execution in September 2006. In 2008, the university cut \$2 million from its budget, and it is expected to cut between \$6-7 million in 2009 -- a target assigned by the University of Maine system.

budget

This media studies class spent several months investigating various aspects of USM's budget. Though the rest of the class's work is not printed here, their help, tips and advice over the semester were integral to the development of these stories.

Job security in a budget crisis

Some faculty are safer than others

Meagan Dobson

Contributing Writer

Faculty salaries and benefits make up about 51 percent of USM's budget. That's upwards of \$50 million that the university can't really touch when it looks to cut nearly \$7 million from next year's budget to start moving USM back into the black.

Tenured faculty are almost guaranteed to keep their jobs, barring legal complaints, and both full and part-time faculty are protected by their respective unions.

Looking to the 2008-09 fiscal year, which begins July 1, USM's administration is still unsure of — or has not yet announced — how many positions will be eliminated.

Those who will feel it the most are part-time faculty whose contracts are expiring and adjunct faculty who work part-time and are hired to fill the fluctuating needs of the university. Neither position is eligible for tenure, though contracted employees who are maintained for more than six years receive just-cause continuation, which is a sort of tenure, making it difficult to remove their positions. This permanence is not the same as tenure in that there is no possibility for salary increases or rising in position.

Two English faculty who found themselves not rehired at the expiration of their contracts following this semester are Margaret Reimer and Jura Avizienis. The pair began at the university with one-year contracts and then continued on with three-year contracts.

Their not being rehired has been the site of some controversy, and union officials have been involved.

Reimer says that she is fortunate, as she was hired as a part-time instructor on the Saco campus — though is somewhat upset that her benefits have been cut.

She is also thankful that Avizienis was also lucky — she was hired as full-time faculty at LAC.

Reimer is upset about the way in which her position was eliminated. "The department has stated publicly that the reason for the

non-renewal of the two contracts is due to a change in focus — that they need teachers who can pick up creative writing courses."

Beyond the strategic choices made by departments and administrators as to which positions will be eliminated, those who leave, retire, or pass away are not being replaced, under the current hiring freeze.

Departments affected by these kinds of cuts will have fewer people running programs, and some may be asked to teach extra courses.

Mark Lapping the interim provost, said that this is "a very opportunistic approach and is not a strategic one. That bothers me greatly. This means, in reality, that because of several retirements a thriving major like theater has lost several people to retirement or departures." He adds that he feels it's critical to restore and refill these positions as soon as possible, and to fill them with tenured or tenure-track faculty. "But the reality is that we will have fewer part-time and fixed length faculty (adjuncts) here at the university in the coming year."

A recent 'Moving Forward' newsletter written by Joe Wood detailed the fact that USM is not yet sure about how many positions will be eliminated for the upcoming fiscal year.

"At this point," said Thomas Power, a theater professor and head of grievances for Associated Faculties of the Universities of Maine, "the administration has told AFUM that they do not plan to let any full time faculty go other than by attrition or retirement."

He says that any attempts to terminate full-time faculty will be taken "very seriously and demand accountability in the event that any such termination occurs."

He also agrees with provost Lapping, in that he believes that the loss of faculty through attrition could have negative effects on departments if the wrong people leave.

In regards to budget cuts and staff eliminations, Wood hopes to have a final decision, final total dollar amounts and the impacts of the cuts announced internally in early May.

Leah Peabbles

Contributing Writer

USM reports show the money to pay classified staff has shifted from state-appropriated funds to grants, gifts and fundraisers. The use of state funds to pay classified employees has been halved in the last three years. The money allotted by the state -- along with tuition revenues -- has decreased university-wide, forcing the university to decide between cutting positions or finding new ways to back the paychecks of classified staff.

Classified employees are those paid hourly wages as opposed to salaries, and can be found in many departments throughout the university; including administration, facilities management and the library. More than 60 classified positions have been cut since 2004.

According to Jim Bradley, president of the classified staff union (ASCUM, the Associated Clerical, Office, Laboratory and Technical Staff of the University of Maine), while many salaries are now being paid for through grants, gifts and fundraisers, the university still pays a portion of their benefits, which can be up to 43 percent of their salary.

USM's budget crisis went public last fall. The administration took an \$8.2 million loan from the UMaine system to cover the current hole and anticipated deficits, but a recent PricewaterhouseCoopers audit

suggests that USM is not fully aware of the exact figure of its debt. It is in the wake of this crisis that even more employees have been left bracing themselves for lay-offs.

While classified positions have been diminishing for five years, union president Bradley says in the future, classified positions may not be the ones at risk. "My hope is that those position eliminations will target administration personnel, as USM has a bloated administrative structure," Bradley said. Many of those personnel are professional staff, who often have higher-paid, salaried positions.

"Should USM not stand by their promise to keep layoffs of the classified staff to a minimum, and do not include top administrators in position eliminations, ACSUM is prepared to launch a major PR campaign to draw attention to the situation and put pressure on USM to do the right thing" Bradley said.

The recent audit cites the lack of previous budgets to account for certain inevitable changes in paying their employees, such as employee raises or cost-of-living increases that have occurred due to the rising cost of housing and heating oil.

This has a huge effect on classified employees, who tend to be the least paid on campus while trying to earn a living wage in one of Maine's most expensive cities.

While the average yearly pay of USM's classified employees

is \$26,554 a year, classified staff in specific departments — for example, the division of university outreach — have average salaries as low as \$16,575 a year.

Often not mentioned are the severance and sabbatical packages the school still pays many former presidents and deans and faculty, which cost the UMaine System \$3.9 million each year.

Despite these figures, Donna Somma, the director of budget, said she believes the university is starting to move in the right direction toward mending their financial crisis. When asked how she felt about the university's actions, Somma responded, "it's not just about budget cuts and hiring freezes, we need to consider how to reorganize and look at the big picture, and how to become more efficient and streamlined."

Bradley said he believes the university is taking much needed measures by finally assessing their programs and structures.

"They must finally decide what it is USM wants to focus on and stick to those areas," said Bradley. "We can't do it all. We shouldn't do it all. I'm cautiously optimistic that when this is all over, USM will be a stronger institution."

As decisions are made, we will try to keep the community informed via our website, www.usmfreepress.org. This is the last printed issue of the semester. We also print once in the summer.



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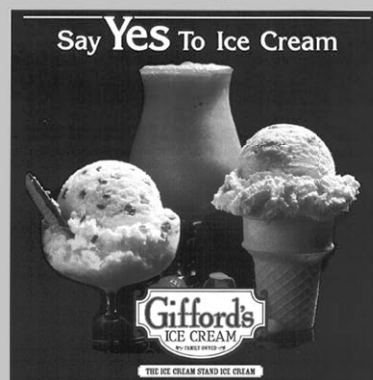
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Newsday Crossword

THE WRITE STUFF by Gail Grabowski
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- ACROSS**
- 1 Tropical tree
 - 5 Open-handed hit
 - 9 Radio switch
 - 13 Hand-cream ingredient
 - 14 Metered vehicle
 - 15 Cathedral topper
 - 16 Corral for cows
 - 18 Book of maps
 - 19 Letter before tee
 - 20 Airplane walkway
 - 21 Molars and incisors
 - 22 Have an evening meal
 - 23 Heating unit
 - 25 Playful pranks
 - 28 Nudge
 - 29 Tummy muscles
 - 32 Pizzeria appliances
 - 33 Snakelike fish
 - 34 Get ready, casually
 - 35 Prohibits
 - 36 Number of Little Pigs
 - 38 Cajun veggie
 - 39 Chinese side dish
 - 40 Garment border
 - 41 Icy precipitation
 - 42 ___ Baba
 - 43 Salty waters
 - 44 Statistical diagrams
 - 45 Secured, as a skate
 - 47 Fly like an eagle
 - 48 Book's name
 - 50 Broadway performer
 - 52 Car-tank filler

- 55 Extremely pale
 - 56 Football coach's lecture
 - 58 Act like a coquette
 - 59 Immense
 - 60 Clamping device
 - 61 Camp shelter
 - 62 Part of EMT: Abbr.
 - 63 Use an overhead compartment
- DOWN**
- 1 Walk back and forth
 - 2 "Too bad!"
 - 3 Outdoor parking areas
 - 4 Got together
 - 5 Beer mugs
 - 6 Memory failure

- 7 Skater's leap
- 8 Type of evergreen
- 9 More likely
- 10 Numbered highway post
- 11 College club
- 12 Netlike material
- 15 Filled completely
- 17 Wild animals' homes
- 22 Tightly packed
- 24 Needle feature
- 25 Snake charmer's snake
- 26 Be of use
- 27 Extremely narrow
- 28 Salon waves
- 30 Artist's cap
- 31 Petty quarrels

- 34 Of the Arctic or Antarctic
- 36 "Of ___ I sing"
- 37 Annoying situation
- 41 Ocean predator
- 43 Perfume feature
- 44 Picnic container
- 46 Watchful
- 47 Performer's platform
- 48 President before Woodrow Wilson
- 49 Land surrounded by water
- 51 Buddy
- 52 Horse's pace
- 53 In addition
- 54 Distort
- 57 Family-room items

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Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle. The difficulty level ranges from Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest). **Rating: BRONZE**

					1		3	6
6		5	8		2			
	3	7	9		6	5		8
	1	8		2	3		6	
	5		6	8		2	1	
4		2	1		8	3	7	
			3		4	6		2
7	8		2					

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Husky Highlights

Women’s Outdoor Track

Landry honored by LEC
Senior Hattie Landry (Acton) was named Track Athlete of the Week for her efforts during the week of April 14-20. During that stretch, Landry led the Huskies to a second place finish at the Bowdoin College Aloha Relays with two first place finishes in 100-meter hurdles and the long-jump. Landry set a school record in the 100-meter hurdles event with a time of 15.46 seconds.

Men’s Outdoor Track

Wheeler and Spaulding garner weekly honors
Senior Curtis Wheeler (Derby, VT) and junior James Spaulding (Lewiston) each received weekly accolades for their performances during the week ending on April 20. Wheeler was awarded Track Athlete of the Week honors for his record-setting effort in the 5,000-meters at the Maine State Collegiate Championships where he broke his previous school record with a time of 14 minutes, 54.65 seconds. Spaulding earned Field Athlete of the Week recognition for school decathlon records he set at the Holy Cross Decathlon event.

Men’s Lacrosse

Tough Keene game ends season
The Huskies finished their season on Saturday with a tough 15-2 loss to Keene State. Keene will enter the post-season as the number two seed in the conference. Sophomore Alex Pleau (Lewiston) and senior Shane Billings (North Berwick) scored fourth quarter goals for USM to prevent the shutout, and senior goalie James Suriyodorn (Deer Park, NY) made a heroic effort with 17 saves in the game. The Huskies finished 4-12 in the season.

Softball

Huskies win thriller to split with Bridgewater
Junior Sabrina Mills (Wesford, MA) singled home the winning run to give the University of Southern Maine softball team an exciting 7-6 win in the opening game of a double-header, which the Huskies split with non-conference opponent Bridgewater State. The Huskies dropped the second game of the twinbill 3-2 in a five-inning game that was called due to darkness. The win leaves the Huskies’ record at 16-17 overall for the season.

Men’s Tennis

Stevenson and Warren take LEC doubles title
Though the Huskies on the whole couldn’t pull out another conference championship – the team settled for second place in the LEC – Josh Warren (Hermon) and Derek Stevenson (Raymond) took their own title in the doubles tournament, competing in the number one slot. Warren typically takes both the doubles and singles win in conference matches, but lost his final singles round 6-0, 6-2 to UMass Boston’s Jovan Jordan-Whitter.

Athletic training program helps, is fed by, USM sports

From TRAINERS page 24

game, one such student is seated on a table, a bag of ice on one of her legs. She’s Jess Hobgood, a senior. Another woman comes up to her -- her sister, Liani -- and they begin to reciprocally apply tape to one another. Last semester, Jess’s studies took her abroad to the Dominican Republic. There, the medical aspect of the work was very much on display, as her group traveled up along mountains and entered into remote villages. There were no athletics involved. “We were just the only health care they got,” she recalls. The trip was organized by an organization called Partners in Rural Health. Physicians and Peace Corps volunteers accompanied students in an extreme example of hands-on learning. According to Ben Towne, professor and director of the program, this emphasis on practical experience is not just helpful, but completely necessary: like more and

more programs that are producing certified athletic trainers, his students are not just required to pass their classes and a written test, but a final, “practical exam.” Sometimes this can block a student from graduating, but rightfully so. “We want students to feel completely comfortable out there,” says Towne. Down on the softball field, two other students, sophomores Jasmine Quarles and Amber Shorty, now accompany Gerken. They’ve supplied the water for the game and keep an eye on the athletes as they warm up. Ideally, their services will not be required from here on out. Like many others, they point to the hours involved in this line of study as one of the most difficult aspects -- they are expected to put in 150 clinical hours, looking over the shoulder of a professional or having one look over theirs. “This, in itself, is like another job in addition to school,” says Shorty. “You just don’t get paid for it.”

Always maintain the correct balance between school and play.



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Puzzle answers from page 20

WOW	STOM	EMER	TEMT	1	4	6	5	9	2	3	8	7
ES	VI	GE	FLIR	2	8	9	4	7	3	9	1	5
LSK	CHAL	KI	ASHEN	5	7	3	8	6	1	9	4	2
GAS	ACTOR	SOAR	TITLE	6	5	3	7	1	2	8	9	4
CHARTIS	SEAS	AL	ICE	7	9	8	6	1	2	3	5	4
SLEET	HEM	RI	CE	8	5	3	7	1	2	3	5	4
OKRA	PREP	BANS	THREE	9	3	5	8	6	1	4	9	2
ABS	PROD	CAPE	RS	4	6	4	3	7	2	5	8	1
THE	THE	DINE	ESS	8	2	5	9	4	6	9	3	7
TEETH	AL	IS	LE	7	6	1	2	3	8	5	4	9
ATLAS	CAT	LE	PEN	9	3	1	4	5	7	6	2	8
SPIRE	ALOE	TAXI	SP	6	4	3	1	5	7	6	2	8
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MIKE ON SPORTS

The center of Maine baseball

Mike Tardiff
Columnist

Before I met USM baseball coach Ed Flaherty, I already knew a great deal about him. I knew about his playing career at the University of Maine, his two national championships, and the storied baseball program he’s put together here at USM.

Heck, I even knew how tall his eldest son was.

But it didn’t strike me until this week, when I first shook his hand, that the center of the Maine baseball universe is located in the Costello Sports Complex.

Since the venerable Dr. John Winkin stepped down as coach at Husson College earlier this year due to health problems, our own coach Flaherty is becoming the new face of baseball in the state of Maine, and with good reason: he’s everywhere.

Sitting beside Flaherty in the dugout following the Huskies’ come-from-behind win against Thomas College, I was, for one of the first times in my life, strapped for words. I didn’t want to ask any stupid questions or annoy the legendary skipper.

But Flaherty’s influence transcends the 675 wins he has amassed during his tenure at USM and the litany of Hall of Fames across the country that he belongs to.

Take, for instance, the impact he’s had outside of just box scores.

His son Ryan is arguably the best shortstop in all of college baseball, a lock to be an early round draft pick, and, I might add, the ideal candidate to represent Maine baseball at the highest level.

If you don’t believe me, check out a little blog called Flash’s Journal, a project of his that can be found at vucommidores.com. I certainly don’t think Ryan learned how to be such a great role model without one of his own.

But good baseball genes aren’t all that coach Flaherty brings to the table. He’s also a consummate teacher, or so I’m told by many.

In fact, on the same day that I met him after the Thomas game, I heard a fellow student behind me tell one of his buddies that “Flaherty is awesome in class” and that he couldn’t wait to take another one. And this is not to mention the renowned baseball clinics that he puts on every year for local athletes.

It is one thing to be a good coach, but it is another thing to be an active member in a community. That is what made coach Winkin such a special coach and makes him such an important person, not only to baseball, but the state of Maine. He didn’t just fill out lineup cards or teach proper pitching mechanics.

He improved the community through his service off the baseball diamond, not unlike Flaherty.

I don’t think anyone can sufficiently emulate the work that John Winkin did around the state. After all, it was on coach Winkin’s field that I played my high school baseball games and it was the program that coach Winkin built just a few decades ago that produced the likes of Flaherty, Mike Bordick and others.

But if there is anyone who can even come close, it’s the guy you’ll find sitting quietly cross-legged in a dugout at Towers field when the Huskies are playing ball.

D’Alfonso, Burleson lead potent pack of Huskies

Mike Tardiff
Staff Writer

The USM baseball team flexed their offensive muscles last week and picked up three non-conference wins before heading into the final stretch of conference play.

Led by juniors Anthony D’Alfonso (Westbrook) and Chris Burleson (Portland), the Huskies slugged their way to come-from-behind wins against Thomas and Endicott and coasted by Bates to move their overall record to 22-9 on the season.

The wins were crucial in maintaining momentum heading into double-headers against conference foes Keene State and UMass Boston over the weekend.

But that momentum could have been snapped, had it not been for the play of Burleson and D’Alfonso. Facing an early 1-5 deficit against Thomas, the two connected for a pair of home-runs to rally the Huskies into an 11-8 win.

In terms of advancing to playoffs, it wasn’t necessarily an important win – it’s the conference games that will earn the Huskies a higher seed in the tournament. But, Burleson said after the win against Thomas, “you can’t slack off in these at-bats because they’ll carry over to the conference games.”

Judging by his output over the three game stretch, Burleson isn’t slacking off. The former Deering High School standout ended the week at a 6-for-14 mark that included four home runs and eight RBIs, keeping his batting average at a red-hot .427 to lead the team.

“I’ve watched (Burleson) play since he was in Little League with my son and I’ve known that he has had the potential to dominate at this level,” said coach Ed Flaherty. “He’s definitely having a dominating season. He’s playing a good shortstop for us too.” Until this season, Burleson traditionally played centerfield.

Burleson’s partner in crime, D’Alfonso, isn’t slacking at the plate either. The Huskies’ clean-up hitter provided a carbon-copy of Burleson’s 6-for-14 campaign at the plate while contributing three home runs of his own to bring his season total to ten.

“Anthony is a presence in the middle of our line-up,” said Flaherty. “He’s the kind of player who can give you a couple of runs with the swing of a bat because he can hit the ball out of the yard.”

The play of D’Alfonso and Burleson was also magnified by the injury bug that has plagued the Huskies throughout the season. With injuries nagging junior Andrew Stacy (Denmark) and sophomore Collin Henry

(Penobscot), who both contribute on the mound, in the field and at the plate, the Huskies have had to get extra production from their leaders and key performances from elsewhere.

On the pitching side, freshman Nick Hahn (Guilford, CT) has earned his stripes by providing key relief appearances including a 5.2 inning campaign at Endicott where he managed to stop the team’s bleeding and allow D’Alfonso, who hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning, to overcome Endicott’s early 6-2 lead and push the Huskies to an 8-6 victory.

Offensively, sophomore Josh Mackey (Danvers, MA) played well during the week going 7-for-12, while filling in for the offensive juggernaut, senior co-captain Eddie Skeffington (Everett, MA), who uncharacteristically went 2-for-12 on the week.

But the Huskies still couldn’t manage to fire on all cylinders and put away lesser opponents as quickly as they would have liked. Mid-week games against teams like Thomas typically do not ignite the hottest competitive fires in players, a problem that Husky players and coaches alike prepare for.

“Coach told us that in these games we’re as much playing against ourselves as we are against

HUSKY HERO

Interview by John Forestell

Name: Shannon Kynoch
Year: Senior
Major: Social Work
Sport: Basketball, Lacrosse

FP: You’re from the great state of Vermont, which is known for its cheddar cheese, do you enjoy cheddar cheese?

Shannon: Very much so, cheese is one of my favorite foods.

FP: I enjoy cheese very much too. Do you have any other favorite foods?

Shannon: I really like tootsie pops (the blue kind), dill pickles and macaroni soup.

FP: You’re a two sport athlete at USM, who got you started with athletics?

Shannon: Well, when I was in about the second grade I started doing recreation sports in my hometown. I played pretty much all of them when I was little, then I ended up sticking with basketball and softball in middle school and high school.

FP: How come you didn’t play softball at USM?

Shannon: I was coming off of a really intense basketball season, and I didn’t think I could do it again for softball. I know they play a ton of games in their season. When my junior year rolled around Sue Frost asked if I would be interested in playing lacrosse. I knew that it wasn’t as many games and I could be flexible with it, so I figured why not?



FP: I love that kind of spontaneity, what do you enjoy about lacrosse?

Shannon: I really enjoy my teammates, and not having it be as stressful and intense as basketball. It’s always been fun for me.

FP: You’re due to graduate in a couple of weeks, what are some of the things you’re going to miss about USM?

Shannon: A lot of things. USM has been really good to me. I think I’m going to miss walking around campus and seeing people, definitely going to miss athletics, and being involved. I always had things to do here, and things going on. It’ll be weird to not have that.

FP: You’re pretty well known on campus, but is there anything you want the rest of USM to know about Shannon Kynoch?

Shannon: I think if you know me, you know me and I don’t really hide too much. I’m always looking for a good time with good people. I’ve heard that because I’m six feet tall people are intimidated by me but there’s absolutely no need for that, I am the biggest pansy in the league!!



Sophomore Josh Mackey (Danvers, MA) attempts to turn a double play after tagging a runner out at 2nd base. The Huskies rallied to beat

STAFF PHOTO BY BRANDON MCKENNEY

the other teams,” Burleson said of the typical lull in energy in mid-week games.

“We’ve got to start rolling together. We’ve got good individual hitters, but we’ve got to piece it all together. We can’t have different spots of the order hot and others not.”

But despite the lack of energy, the Huskies have managed to persevere, hoping that eventually they’ll be healthy and that all of

the bats will catch fire at the same time down the stretch.

“I don’t think we’ve seen the best out of this team, yet,” Flaherty said.

And for a team that has already outscored their opponents 275-167, that could prove fatal for the rest of the league and anyone who tries to stop them in the post-season.



Men’s & women’s outdoor track and field



STAFF PHOTOS BY JASON JOHNS

Top left: Freshman Steve LaLeau (Saco) competes in the 110 meter hurdles. This weekend he placed fourth in the New England Alliance championship race.

Top right: It’s rare when seniors Curtis Wheeler and Nick Wheeler (Derby, VT) aren’t leading a pack. Curtis just set a school record in the 5,000 meter race, for which he was given the conference track athlete of the week award.

Left: Junior Brenna Widdis (Gorham) is seen competing in the high jump, an event she took fourth place in this weekend in the Little East Conference championship.

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SPORTS

The Free Press | April 28, 2008 24

Women's lax earns first round bye, second round at home

Kendrick leads Huskies to 18-15 win against Keene

Sarah Trent

Executive Editor

The women's lacrosse program will stick to the benches on Tuesday afternoon – while other Little East teams are vying for a place in Thursday's semifinal round, USM has earned its first playoff bye – and first home play-off match – in recent history.

Heading into Saturday's game against rival Keene State, they knew it would be a tough match – they're a "fast, strong, good team," said head coach Sue Frost.

But more than that was the mental game: winning would keep the Huskies at number two in the conference behind defending champion Eastern Connecticut, and give them a first-round bye in the tournament. Losing could have dropped them as low as number four, depending on how other conference teams performed in their final matches.

But Frost and her team felt prepared.

"I ate, drank, slept Keene for the last week," she said.

And it paid off.

In a game featuring strong defensive play and an incredible seven goals from freshman Kristy Kendrick, the Huskies swallowed the Owls with an 18-15 finish.

"Everything I knew we could be happened tonight," said Frost after the game, and rather than credit Kendrick's goals, she said that they won because they were really able to gel as a team.

She also admits that no one really saw it coming. Earlier in the week, they'd faced what Frost called a "rough match" against local rival University of New England.

"We should have won," she said, and heading into the important match-up with Keene, "they scared me."

But, she said, her team pulls through in the big ones, "which is where it counts."

The Huskies ended their regular season 7-8, and 5-1 in the conference. The only conference team they've lost to is Eastern. The conference is waiting on a Sunday match between Keene and UMass Dartmouth to determine the tournament schedule, but the Huskies know they'll be playing someone – possibly an angry Keene – on Thursday on the home grass.

Other strong contributors against Keene were sophomore defender Britt Bennett, who Frost said has been a "huge addition" to this year's team, senior goalie Katie Quartuccio, who had a phenomenal 19 saves in the win, and senior Justene Dorr, who added four goals.

Support the Huskies as they fight toward the conference championship game on Thursday. The time and opponent will be announced Monday, check out usm.maine.edu/athletics for details.

"Shoulda, woulda, coulda"

Huskies fall in 8-9 loss to UNE

Sarah Trent

Executive Editor

"This is why they're called heartbreakers," said senior Rob Dorr after last week's neck-and-neck match against the University of New England.

And it really was a heartbreaker – the Huskies weren't losing until there were just 41.7 seconds left on the clock, when UNE rallied for the tie-breaker and a 9-8 come-from-behind win.

Coming out of the first half, the game was tied at five. The Huskies came out on fire, scoring three in the third quarter off the momentum they'd gained in the second. But they couldn't maintain it, and couldn't manage to score at all in the fourth quarter, while UNE maintained composure and fired four past senior goalie James Suriyodorn.

But, as he looked back on the game, Dorr admitted that it was one of the best the men played all season. "I was really pushing for us to pull it off," he said, "but – shoulda, woulda, coulda."

And despite the final score, he wasn't hanging his head. Quite the opposite, he said, "it was just a fun game to play in."

Junior Preston Gilbert, who leads the team with 30 goals and 29 assists and who led the scoring effort against UNE with four goals, wasn't so quick to let the loss slide under the rug. While he was eager to point out that the Husky defense "played unbelievably," he said he'd put a lot on his shoulders, so when he couldn't come through at the end, he took the hit personally.



STAFF PHOTO BY SARAH TRENT

Senior Matt Soule takes a shot toward on UNE. The Huskies dominated much of the second half, but lost their grip just at the end, finishing 8-9.

Following the loss, coach Malcolm Chase brought his guys into a huddle while UNE did a cheer and lined up to shake hands. "I told them that's exactly the kind of games we want to be in," he said.

"UNE was a formidable opponent," he said, and one of the only local teams against which his team can play a good, solid match.

After a second loss on Saturday to Keene State, the men's lacrosse team ended its season 4-12. But lax addicts have no fear, the women's team is playing in the conference semifinals in Gorham on Thursday.



STAFF PHOTO BY BRANDON MCKENNEY

Head Athletic Trainer Matthew Gerken works on the foot of senior lacrosse player Shannon Kynoch.

Giving & receiving: athletic trainers at USM

David O'Donnell

Sports Editor

To the last several generations of athletes, the presence of an athletic trainer is nothing special – they're in the dugout, on the sidelines and in the clubhouse. They stand watch at games and even at many practices. Their job is to work with injured athletes before and after events and throughout the long road to recovery from anything serious.

But to the general public, there is room for confusion. While athletic trainers have existed in school programs for nearly a century, in one form or another, it is only in the past several decades that the profession has enjoyed any bona fide credentials all its own.

"1970 was the first time athletic trainers were even certified," says Matthew Gerken, head athletic trainer at USM's own department. "Prior to that, people were tapers, they were massagers, just kind of jacks of all trades."

So it was more or less natural that their role solidified into somebody athletes could rely on when their bodies needed work. Over

time, that person's expertise and training became more and more medically oriented.

On a Thursday afternoon, Gerken sits beside a cushioned table in the department's offices. Junior Thomas Boothby is on that table, and Gerken is running a small sonogram device along the lacrosse player's leg.

Unlike the diagnostic machines you'll find in hospitals -- typically attached to the bellies of pregnant women -- this is one is therapeutic. If all goes well, it could assist Boothby in recovering from a muscular injury.

The machine is eventually put aside, and Gerken begins to stretch and massage the afflicted area.

Athletics training is still -- to use a term many here use frequently -- a "young profession." Despite their certification and prominence, they are in the midst of a struggle to be considered private health care providers in the eyes of most insurance companies. This has so far been accomplished in only a few states.

Often the debate arises as to whether or not, at this relatively early stage in their existence, they might consider changing the name

of the profession. This might help professionals like Gerken avoid confusion from coaches and the community.

"Oh, it can be confusing," says Gerken, "where people think -- oh, a trainer. 'I go to my trainer at the gym.' But what we do is much different. We are health care professionals."

Gerken's department does not just provide these services to USM athletes, but also actively trains and educates students to do the work themselves.

There are currently 30 students working their way toward a bachelor's degree in athletic training here at the university.

It's not difficult to see a circle here -- athlete becomes injured; athlete works closely with an AT in the diagnostic, recovery and rehabilitation process; if an injury proves to be serious or persistent enough, or the player isn't looking toward a career in the pros, that athlete may have just found a whole new way to stay involved in sports.

As Gerken gets ready to head over to the diamond for a softball

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